THE

BRITISH WORLD IN THE EAST:

A GUIDE

HISTORICAL, MORAL, AND COMMERCIAL,

TO

India, China, Australia, South Africa,

AND THE

OTHER POSSESSIONS OR CONNEXIONS

OF

GREAT BRITAIN

IN THE

EASTERN AND SOUTHERN SEAS.

BY

LEITCH RITCHIE.

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THE

BRITISH WORLD IN THE EAST.

BOOK VI.

THE COUNTRIES ADJOINING INDIA, AND THEIR CONNECTION WITH REMOTER POWERS.

CHAPTER I.

BELOOCHISTAN AND AFFGHANISTAN.

However well acquainted we might be with the people of India and their country, we should be able to form but a very inadequate idea of their true position and prospects without some knowledge of the adjoining territories, and the connection of these, if any, with more powerful and civilized nations. We have now attempted to trace—with little attention to details, but some anxiety to bring into view the greater land-marks of history—the fortunes of an ancient and extraordinary people shut up for many ages, by circumstances both

of a moral and physical nature, from intercommunion with the rest of mankind. It is next our business to glance round the entire line of frontier, and endeavour to obtain some distinct notions of the genius and general status of their neighbours beyond.

On the west of Sinde, extending westward to the frontiers of Persia, and occupying the whole of the space between these two countries, from the Indian Ocean on the south to Affghanistan on the north, lies Beloochistan, embracing an area of about a hundred and ninety thousand square miles. The sea-board, although six hundred miles in extent from east to west, affords no good harbour, but in some places the anchorage is sufficiently secure. The surface of the country is in general rugged and elevated; a production of the Indian Caucasus running through its entire breadth to the sea, with branches forming various congeries of hills and mountain-ridges, intermingled with rocky table-lands. Towards the north this character of the country changes. The elevations dwindle by degrees on the west till they are entirely lost in a desert of sand and rocks, near the further border of which lies the course of the Helmund. On the east they sink more suddenly into the plain of Cutch Gundava; and through the mountains between opens the famous Bolan Pass, and more to the southward that of the Moola. These are the names of two torrents, along which the savage route winds which connects Beloochistan with the valley of the Indus. These are the only waters of any magnitude in the northern division of the country, although even they do not reach the mighty river to which they appear to be hastening, but are swallowed up and lost in the burning sands of Gundava. In the southern portion there are many such headlong streams, which in the

wet season carry great volumes of water to the sea, but at other times mark their course only by a bed of dry stones, occasionally covered with the rapid vegetation of India.

It is needless to say, that in a country where the elevations frequently attain, as is the case with Khelat, to a height of six thousand feet above the sea, there is every variety of climate, from intense cold to scorching heat; and so suddenly do the mountains rise, that this variety is sometimes encountered in a journey of a few miles. The western desert is not merely inhospitable, but in some seasons impassable. It is then a moving sea of sand, the impalpable particles of which float in the heavy atmosphere, and unite with the scorching winds for the destruction of animal life.

If travellers are to be believed, Beloochistan is rich in almost all kinds of mineral productions, including the precious metals; but their statements are in general vague, and sometimes contradictory. It has been ascertained, however, that copper, lead, iron, antimony, sulphur, and alum, abound in various parts of the country; while common salt is too plentiful to be advantageous to vegetation.

Little is known respecting the vegetable kingdom; although all writers agree in their report of its riches, including, within a singularly small space, the productions of the temperate and the torrid zones. The tamarind and the date, a species of teak, the babool, the mulberry, the mimosa, the tamarisk, grow to a great magnitude; while the plantain, sycamore, walnut, mango, and other trees, are found in the different regions of the country. Most of the fruits and esculent vegetables of Europe are produced; melons attain to a gigantic size; mulberries are dried and ground into meal for bread; and assafœtida is held in much estimation by the people

as an agreeable food. Wheat, barley, millet, oil-seeds are the principal crops; and, in the hot regions, rice, cotton, indigo, and tobacco.

Besides most of the wild animals common in this part of Asia, there are dromedaries in the low country, and camels in the mountains; and the horses of the north-west, where Arabian blood has improved the breed, are exported to India.

The south-east province, bordering on Sinde and the Indian Ocean, is called Luss or Lussa. The boundary line between it and the British territory is the Hubb river, still more strongly marked on the Beloochistan side by the mountain range we have described as intersecting the country. The province, however, is comparatively level, but unproductive, although breeding considerable numbers of cows, buffalos, camels, and goats.

The next province, proceeding northward, is Jhalawan, with a mountainous and barren soil, subsisting a pastoral population of only thirty thousand persons on an area of twenty thousand square miles.

On the east the province of Cutch Gundava, bordering on Sinde, is remarkable as possessing the openings of the Bolan and Moola Passes, the two great lines of communication between Khorasan and India. The country lies low, and its few rivers, or rather intermittent torrents, being absorbed by its thirsty sands, the climate is excessively sultry, and the desolating simoom is of frequent occurrence. The soil is a hard clay, deposited at some early period by the torrents, and then baked by the burning sun. Towards the south-east all traces of vegetation gradually disappear, and the desert of Shikarpoor stretches away towards the Indus for a distance of forty miles. Cutch Gundava, notwithstanding, is the

most populous province of Beloochistan, and its unpromising soil amply repays the trouble of irrigation, yielding two crops of grain in the year, besides cotton and sugar, and all the fruits of a warm climate.

On the west lies the small province of Khelat, piled on mountains never less than five thousand, and sometimes six thousand feet above the sea. The consequence of this elevation is, that in a latitude which elsewhere gives excessive heat, there is frost for five or six months in the year; and in winter and spring a cutting north-easterly wind, accompanied by snow, sleet, or rain, blows almost without intermission. This province is the seat of Khelat, the capital of Beloochistan, and the only town of any magnitude in the country, although it does not contain more than twelve thousand inhabitants.

The most northerly province is Sarawan, with a rugged and elevated surface, rising with a peak twelve thousand feet high, where the Beloochistan and Affghan mountains begin to intermingle. On the west are the Sarawanee ridges, on the east those that overhang the Bolan Pass, and on the south the highlands of Khelat. It forms, therefore, an irregular table-land, interspersed with level and fertile tracts, of which the principal are the valley of Shawl and the plain of Moostung. On the west the elevations of this province sink into the Desert, and the few mountain streams it has are lost in its burning sands. In the opposite direction its only considerable torrent, the Bolan, is in like manner absorbed in the plains of Cutch Gundava; and there the climate is distinguished by a general aridity, which, except in some places where this is counteracted by local circumstances, represses vegetation and confines population.

The only remaining province, Mekran, is the most extensive of the whole, being bounded on the west by

Persia, and extending northward from the sea to Affghanistan. This region is in the greater part still unexplored, and will probably long remain a wilderness, inhabited by wild beasts and tribes of as savage men. It is in general rugged and elevated, and is almost completely bordered by mountain ranges, except on the south, where the tract along the sea-shore is low and level. On the north it is protected by the Wushutee chain from the sandy desert. It has no great rivers, but numerous water-courses run from north to south, expanding into wide and deep channels as they reach the plain on the coast. The beds of these torrents become dry in the hot period, and are immediately filled with the rank and rapid jungle of the region, and their never-failing inhabitants—wild beasts. A portion of the wet season exhibits all the fury of the south-west monsoon; and in a portion of the dry season, described as the "date-ripening," the sun is so scorching that the inhabitants are confined to their huts. The date, indeed, which flourishes in the fiercest heat, forms an important article of food; while along the coast the people—descendants of the Ichthyophagi of Alexander's historians—live like their ancestors upon fish.

Such is Beloochistan in its physical aspect, and its moral is not more inviting. The nominal king of the country is the Khan of Khelat; but the first-mentioned province, Lussa, has a hereditary prince of its own, the vassal of the Khan; and the last, Mekran, for the reason, we presume, that it is not worth a contest, has succeeded in throwing off the yoke of legitimate authority altogether, and is divided, or rather torn asunder, by numerous petty chiefs. The government of the Khan is absolute, or in other words,—for there is perhaps no really despotic authority in the world,—it is regulated by transmitted

custom, and is kept in the beaten track by fear. He has the power of life and death as regards all his subjects, but he cannot tax directly the Beloochees or the Brahoes, who are the ruling tribes. His revenue is insignificant, little more than 30,000*l.* a year, and is derived from his resources as a landed proprietor, from dues on trade, and from arbitrary exactions on the industrious portion of the people (or those able to answer them), chiefly the Parsees, and Jat cultivators.

We have already described the struggle of the late Khan with the British, which ended in his death; and the paltry number of troops he was able to raise in so imminent a peril, shows that real power and theoretical despotism are very different things in such eastern governments. The Beloochees are heavily armed with matchlock, spear, sword, dagger, and shield, and they were never averse to closing with the British troops; but no advantage, as we have seen, can compensate for the want of discipline. "The brave Beloochees," says Sir Charles Napier, in one of his despatches, "first discharging their matchlocks and pistols, dashed on the bank with desperate resolution, but down went their bold and skilful swordsmen under the superior power of the musket and bayonet."

The inhabitants are usually divided into Beloochees and Brahoes; but the former are in reality composed of numerous tribes, each distinct from the others. The Brahoes may be described as the Tartars of Beloochistan, wandering about the country, as the seasons vary, from pasture to pasture, and in winter squatting under tents of felt or goats' hair. Civilization, such as it is, appears to diminish as the distance increases from Hindostan; and in its extreme west, the people are freebooters by profession, and scour the country at the rate, it is said, of seventy or eighty miles a day. The love of highway

robbery, indeed, appears to be a national taste, for even amidst the comparative civilization of Sinde, it is said the Beloochee chiefs disguise themselves, and go forth to plunder for amusement. Besides the native tribes, there are Hindoos almost everywhere to be met with, who manage the monetary concerns of the people, but, influenced by the savageism around them, retain few of the characteristics of Brahminism. The whole population is supposed to be considerably under half a million.

Hospitality, courage, excess in sensual pleasures, polygamy at will, the purchase of women like articles of mere luxury—all things, good and bad, that distinguish man in the lower stages of civilization, are to be found among the Beloochees. They pass most of their time in smoking tobacco or hemp, and chewing opium; and besides warlike exercises, their principal amusement is gambling. The men wear a cotton tunic, either blue or white, something shorter than those of the English peasants, with loose trousers drawn in at the ankles, and a scarf or shawl wound round the waist. In winter the upper class have an additional tunic of quilted cotton, the lower, a capote of felt or coarse cloth. Their cap is round, with a projecting crown, and beneath it their hair falls in dark masses upon their shoulders, unmixed at any age with grey, as both sexes use a dye of henna and indigo. The women have wider trousers, and their tunic is open nearly to the waist, exposing the bosom; but when they go abroad, they are enveloped in the shroud-like drapery of the Affghan women. They are, as among all barbarous nations, the drudges of the men, but still they have a certain weight in the counsels of their masters, and may be said, upon the whole, to be treated with more distinction than in most Mahomedan countries.

Mekran, in the time of Marco Polo, must have been in a very different condition. The people, he tells us, were idolators, and raised abundance of rice, carrying on a great trade both by sea and land. He calls the country Kesmacoran, interpreted Kedge-Mekran, from the name of the capital town. Kedge, which gives its name to the surrounding district, is near the Persian frontier, and stands on the Mooleanee river, reported by Pottinger to be an abundant and never-failing stream. In recent times it carried on a considerable trade with Candahar, Khelat, Shikarpore, and the coast; but owing to the distractions of the country, in which its chief threw off his allegiance to the Khan of Khelat, the place has decayed, and its merchants removed.

The Beloochees are fond of bardic songs, and it is the profession of one of the tribes to scream forth the genealogies of their entertainers to the discordant music of the tom-tom, the cymbals, and a rude guitar. Colonel Pottinger inclines to the opinion that they are of Jewish origin, and traces several customs, particularly those concerning marriage, adultery, and divorce, to the institutes of Moses. The personal appearance of the people would seem to favour this hypothesis; but they themselves repudiate it as a reproach, and assume to be of Arab ancestry. They are Mahomedans of the Sooni sect, and the Shia doctrine is rejected with detestation even by the descendants of the Persians. The attempt of Nadir Shah to introduce uniformity in religion throughout the whole Mussulman world is characteristic. Among the proofs he affected to examine were the sacred books both of the Jews and Christians; but when the Shia high priest protested against such an exercise of temporal power as he contemplated, Nadir had him strangled on the spot, and all difficulty for a time was at an end.

Having thus thrown down the gauntlet to the established church of Persia, he confiscated its revenue, to the extent of three millions sterling, for the purpose of reconciling the rest of his subjects to his interference, by paying the army its arrears and reducing the taxes of the people. But all was unavailing. The two great sects are as hostile as ever, and in Beloochistan more especially, a Christian would meet with far more toleration than a Shia.

Industry may be supposed to be in a very low state in a country like Beloochistan. They spin the hair of goats and camels into ropes, and weave it into coarse fabrics; and the wool of their sheep they manufacture into garments, colouring them with madder and other native dyes. Some matchlocks and other arms are made at Khelat. Horses, as we have mentioned, are exported to India; and as vessels are unable to reach the beach, the animals are made to swim out to them at spring tides. They exchange also some butter, hides, wool, drugs, dried fruits, &c., for rice, spices, dye-stuffs, a small quantity of British and Indian manufactures, and slaves from Muscat.

Beloochistan is supposed to have been one of the hundred and twenty-seven provinces of that potentate who "reigned from India even unto Ethiopia," and who divorced his queen because she refused to humour a drunken whim by transgressing the rules of modesty prescribed to eastern women. Alexander traversed it on his way back to Persepolis, and Arrian describes the tract with great correctness; its desolation and aridity—the necessity of digging in the beds of torrents for water—the food of the inhabitants, dates and fish—the violence of the monsoon in Mekran—and the impossibility of subsisting a large army on such a route, which led to

the destruction of a great part of the expedition of the Greeks.

Beloochistan was also traversed by the armies both of the Caliphs and Moguls; and it became, though little more than nominally, a portion of the empire of Akbar. In the middle of the eighteenth century, it was tributary to Nadir Shah, who bestowed upon the great-grandfather of the present ruler of Khelat the office of commander-in-chief.

On the north of Beloochistan lies Affghanistan, extending westward to Persia, eastward to the Indus, and bounded on the north by an undefined line including the country of the Huzareh and Eimauk Tartars. Its superficial area is about two hundred and twenty-five thousand square miles. Four-fifths of this extent consists of rocks and mountains, rising in elevation till they reach the stupendous height of twenty thousand feet. The Cabool river runs eastward into the Indus, and the Helmund is the grand duct of the west, carrying the waters of that part of the country into the extraordinary swamp of Hamoon. The permanent portion of this expanse of waters is seventy miles long by twenty in breadth, though rarely more than three or four feet deep. From its eastern bank, a path, upwards of a mile long and about a yard wide, cut through the reeds, leads to a hill rising from the bosom of this shallow sea, and crowned by a fort. The lower classes of the inhabitants wade through the thick waters, while others are pushed on rafts to their strange resting place, from which a view, thus described by an eye-witness, is beheld. "Immediately beneath me," says Conolly, "lay a yellow plain, as level as a calm sea, formed by the tops of reeds, and extending north and south far beyond the reach of vision. On the east it was bounded by a pale yellow marking the boundary of the lake, where the less-thickly growing

weeds are annually burned down, and a few poor Khuls clear away the ground for the cultivation of water-melons. Beyond, again, in this direction, appeared the dark green tamdrisks, whole forests of which fringe the lake. Here and there, as we looked around on every side, were seen patches of blue water, and on the west a large clear lake swept away until out of sight." The waters of western Affghanistan have no visible outlet from this lake, but are carried off by evaporation; although it is conjectured by Pottinger that at some early period there was a communication with the river Mooleanee (called by different names in its earlier course), and that they were thus conducted to the ocean.

On the other side the Cabool river carries the waters of a portion of the Hindoo Koosh, and of the elevated country it traverses in its after career, into the Indus. Swollen by the number of tributaries it receives, it sweeps along the northern base of the Khyber mountains a fierce and abounding stream, which it is impossible to cross otherwise than on such coracles as are used in the Deccan. At Dobundee it becomes navigable for boats of forty or fifty tons to Attock, a distance of forty miles.

Between Hamoon and the Cabool river, the Abistada Lake is another receptacle for the waters of Affghanistan. No two authorities agree about its extent, which no doubt varies with the seasons; some describing it as being in appearance an inland sea, while others confine its diameter to a few miles.

The natural divisions of the country are too confined, and the political divisions too little known and too unimportant to render a brief description very intelligible. Its more prominent features, however, are these:—To the north of Cutch Gundava is the extensive territory of Sewistan, but little differing from the former in its

character. It is to this day, however, almost unknown. It is bounded on the east by the Suliman mountains, between which and the Indus stretches due north for three hundred miles the flat tract of Daman, or Derajat. These mountains are supposed to be the ancestral seat of the Affghans, and are remarkable for their varied and vigorous vegetation. The soil of Daman is of the indurated clay already described, which becomes prolific when subjected to cultivation; but Derajat, the line next the Indus, is fertile and populous. It is at present in the clutches of the Sikhs, who do their best to neutralize the gifts of nature by tyranny and oppression.

To the west of Sewistan is the valley of Pisheen, a lofty table-land, with a fertile soil and moderate climate. It is traversed by the great route from Sinde by the Bolan and Kojuck passes, and the inhabitants employ themselves in the carrying trade, as well as in agriculture and the rearing of horses. Proceeding in a north-easterly direction from the Amram mountains, the upper barriers of Pisheen, we find an extensive country overspread by the Toba and other mountain ranges, in the midst of which lies the Abistada Lake.

The Toba mountains, although bleak and barren in winter, have a delicious climate in summer; and the inhabitants, while bearing an infamous character among Europeans, realize, as regards themselves, the pleasures if not the innocence of Arcadia. The plateaux of their hills are furnished with springs in abundance, and we are told the water is like running diamonds, the verdure as a carpet of emeralds, and the air perfumed like musk. "The shepherds of Toba," as Conolly was informed, "pitch their camps together, and entertain each other for joy of the increase which the new year brought to them; feasting on lamb and fresh curds, and

all the varieties which their wives made with milk; hunting with hawks and greyhounds during the day, or, perhaps, following a wolf or a hyena to his lair and tying him there; while at night they would sit out late in social parties, conversing and telling stories, or dancing the attun."

This region is bounded on the west and north by the comparatively well-known tract between Candahar and Ghizni, and Ghizni and Cabool. The great road from India leads in a north-westerly direction from the Pisheen valley to Candahar.

Candahar is a populous town, situated on a small but fertile and well-watered plain, producing grain and fruits in abundance. Commanding the southern route from the Indus to the western countries, it has fallen a prey by turns to most of the invaders of India, and, in 1842, its fortifications were destroyed by the British. The houses of the poorer classes are mud hovels, while those of the wealthy occupy a great space with their numerous courts surrounded by walls. The walls of the large rooms are adorned with pictures and mirrors; and the space between, instead of being painted or papered as in Europe, is covered with what resembles a frost-work of silver, consisting of talc finely powdered, and sprinkled over a varnish of size while wet. Candahar, being the head quarters of the carrying trade of western Affghanistan, is thronged by foreigners of all costumes and complexions, in the midst of which the native women glide like spectres, enveloped from head to foot in their long white veils, and a piece of net-work before their eyes, enabling them to see. The population is variously stated, but supposed by Mr. Thornton to amount to about fifty thousand.

The valley of the Turnuk extends from Candahar to Ghizni, a distance of two hundred and twenty-five miles,

during which it gradually contracts from a width of thirty miles to half a mile. The lower part of the valley is in general a barren waste, but some portions are open and level, and well cultivated; and the higher districts especially are much more fertile than the lower, being watered by canals; and are also more populous, being studded with numerous villages, protected by walls and small forts, and encompassed by fine orchards of fruit trees, with many clumps of willows and poplars, and large fields of corn. The canals are brought with great labour from the higher portions of the river; the stream throughout a considerable part of its course being enclosed between steep banks, and on a lower level than the surface of the country through which it flows.

The Turnuk valley is closed by a range of hills which separate it from the Cabool valley; and on an isolated ridge of this range stands the celebrated town and fortress of Ghizni. The population, including the garrison, has been estimated as high as ten thousand, but half that number may perhaps be nearer the truth. It is, however, an entrepôt of trade between the Indus and Cabool; and the neighbourhood, which is well studded with villages, yields abundance of supplies. The site of the place being seven thousand seven hundred and twenty-six feet above the sea, the cold is intense in winter; and it is said that the population has been more than once destroyed by snow-storms. At three miles' distance are the ruins of the ancient city which was destroyed by the Ghori prince in the twelfth century, sparing only the humble tomb of Mahmood of Ghizni and its sandal-wood gates.

From Ghizni to Cabool the distance is ninety miles, during which the route slopes gradually from the pass in

the hills above the former place. Occasionally, however, it is blocked up by rugged eminences, which leave only a narrow gorge for the passage of the river. The Cabool valley is rugged and barren in the upper part, but about twenty miles from the city it opens into the rich and beautiful vale of Maidan, appearing a continuous range of gardens and orchards, intersected by numerous streams and enclosed by lofty hills.

The city of Cabool is encompassed by hills on three sides, that on the south being the closest and steepest, and being defended by walls along its summit and sides, intended to repel the Ghiljies, although now suffered to fall into ruins. The town itself, which contains a population of sixty thousand, is surrounded by a mud wall; and on a rocky eminence on the east is the Bala Hissar, or citadel, with the king's palace and gardens on the slope of the acclivity. The great bazaar, destroyed by the British in their unthinking rage, was the most remarkable object in the city. Travellers are eloquent in describing the varied and bustling picture it presented—the heaps of delicious fruit—the masses of snow for sale sparkling in the sun—the shops rising in terraces one above the other—the goods intermingled with the buyers and sellers, arranged in long moving lines—the strange faces and strange costumes peopling the scene—and the confused din of all the languages of the East. Among the crowd, the women, as in most of the towns of Affghanistan, were seen clad in their shroud-like veil, beneath which the imagination might picture, and it is said truly, both beauty of feature and elegance of form.

Among the goods exposed in the shops were those of Great Britain, India, and above all, Russia. Gold is received from Russia and Turkistan, and silver from Russia and China, to the amount of about 30,000*l.* in the

in the year, all of which is sent to India. Raw silk from Turkistan, to the amount of 50,000*l.*, has for the most part the same destination.

The transit trade, and the supply of the extensive valley of Cabool, seem to engross nearly all the industry of the inhabitants; for their rude manufactures are almost confined to leather and iron, with some weaving of cotton and wool. They have nearly everything, however, at hand which can contribute to animal enjoyment: fruits and flowers in unparalleled abundance; provisions, abundant and cheap, with the exception of grain; spirits, distilled by the Armenian inhabitants from grapes; and tobacco, the produce of their own fields. Their long and severe winter, however, appears to freeze up the energies of the people; who in the daytime sit on the floor, cowering over a low table with a fire beneath it, and at night lie back and compose themselves to sleep, merely drawing more completely around them the thick cloths with which the table is covered. Their unglazed windows, in the meantime, admit through the shutters and blinds sufficient air at once to keep them uncomfortable and preserve their lives from the fumes of the charcoal which is their only fuel.

Cabool is divided into numerous little sections, each with small gates of its own, which are built up in times of tumult. This city of fortresses, however, has been repeatedly taken, as we have elsewhere shown, from the year 977 to 1839. The other chief towns in the district are Ghizni, Istalif, and Jellalabad.

Eastward of Cabool are the district of Lughman and vale of Jellalabad; and beyond them Bajour and the Eusufzye country; the former a fertile plain, enclosed by nearly inaccessible mountains, covered with forests of oak and cedar, and abounding in iron ore; and the

latter an almost unknown territory, inhabited by tribes intermingling the Tartar and Affghan character. To the south of these countries lies the rich plain of Peshawur, now in the hands of the Sikhs,—with its uncultivated fields and half-tenanted villages bearing eloquent testimony to the mildness of their sway : and on the north the Affghan territory is bounded by Chitral and Kafiristan, extending along the declivity of the Hindoo Koosh.

Westward and northward of the grand highway we have described from Candahar to Cabool is the Hazareh and Eimauk country, extending from Cabool to Herat. These are the names of two Tartar tribes, the former inhabiting the northern, and the latter the southern portion of the belt of mountains. Although this territory occupies a fourth part of the entire area of Affghanistan, the people suffer themselves without resistance to remain tributary to their surrounding neighbours ; Cabool, Candahar, Herat, Bokhara, and Koondooz grasping at the portions nearest them. The tyranny of these masters, some of whom, to the north, exact their tribute in slaves, is seconded by the severity of their long and dreary winter ; and the Hazarehs are, in consequence, in a state of the most hopeless poverty. Although so low are they in the scale of civilization, that it is the custom, of at least one of the tribes, for the husband to exercise hospitality by consigning his wife to the embraces of his guest, a very agreeable picture is given by Wood, both of their social manners and personal appearance. The Hazarehs are Mahomedans of the Shia sect,—the Eimauks, Soonis ; and both speak the Persian language.

On the west of the Hazareh country, and on the frontiers of Persia, are the valley and city of Herat.

The city, which contains a population that has been variously stated at from forty to one hundred thousand, is enclosed by a mound of earth from forty to sixty feet high, surmounted by a wall strengthened by bastions. On the exterior slope of the mound of earth (which is one hundred feet wide at the bottom) there are two deep trenches, and surrounding which is a wet ditch thirty feet wide. From the extent of the fortifications, it has been calculated that it would take a garrison of twenty thousand men to defend, and an army of thirty thousand men to invest it; and even after the fall of the town the citadel would be susceptible of defence for a considerable time, being flanked by lofty towers, and surrounded by a wet ditch thirty-six feet wide, crossed only by a slight bridge. From a small covered square in the middle of the city four ranges of bazaars diverge at equal distances, dividing the place into quarters. Not an inch of ground is lost; the houses are closely packed together; and some of the small streets, branching from the main ones, are built over so as to resemble tunnels. The result is darkness and almost inconceivable filth; but everything here is sacrificed to the compactness requisite for military defence. In Europe, the towns of the middle ages when surrounded by walls grew upwards since they could not extend laterally, story upon story bein piled upon the houses; but in Asia the increase of population in such circumstances is usually provided for by encroachments on the space already occupied, till the inhabitants might seem to burrow in their own abominations.

The ruins in the neighbourhood testify that Herat was formerly of much greater magnitude, and they also indicate its misfortune in being the outpost of Affghanistan on the side of Persia. War and misrule have had

their effect upon this city, which in the time of Baber was reckoned the finest in the eastern world: but still its situation in a valley luxuriant in corn and wine, and on the highway from India to the west, will always render it a place of interest and importance. "The space between the hills," says a traveller, "is one beautiful extent of little fortified villages, gardens, vineyards, and corn-fields; and this rural scene is heightened by many small streams of shining water." In time of peace it is the most bustling emporium of Central Asia; receiving for transit, besides its own sumptuous carpets, the shawls, indigo, sugar, spices, hides, muslins, chintzes, and brocades of the east; and the tea, porcelain, glass, silk, hardware, woollen cloths, and bullion of Persia, Turkey, and Russia. The Persian inhabitants are, as usual, Shias; the Affghans, Beloochees, and Tartars, Soonis; and besides these are Hindoos, the merchants and bankers of the place; and a small number of Jews.

North of Herat is a narrow district, inhabited by the Toorkish tribe of Jumshedees, and then the kingdom of Khaurism, the capital of which is Khiva, extending from south to north eight hundred miles. This is separated by a considerable belt of steppe from the Russian province of Orenburg; and Bokhara, lying more to the east than Khaurism, is entirely severed by the latter country from Russia. Khiva is six hundred miles north-north-west of Herat, nearly the whole of which, as Abbott informs us, is a barren steppe where even a tent is rarely discovered.

The high road from Herat to Candahar runs south for about a hundred and forty miles through an unimportant country, and then turns off in an easterly direction to Giriskh and Candahar. Giriskh is on the Helmund, which, skirting the great desert separat-

ing Affghanistan from Beloochistan, traverses the low swampy territory of Seistan—a debateable land between the Persians and Affghans—and falls into the lake of Hamoon.

Affghanistan may be described, generally, as an Asiatic Switzerland, the physical properties of which are exaggerated into the extravagance of the east; while Beloochistan, less stupendous in its forms, may be likened in the same manner to the Tyrolese continuation of the Alpine line. The mineral productions of the former already ascertained are gold, silver, iron, copper, antimony, zinc, lead, and coal. In the vegetable kingdom there are some noble fruit-trees, of which a magnificent species of pine inhabits an elevation extending to ten thousand feet above the level of the sea. There are two harvests in the year; one of wheat, barley, beans, peas, &c.; the other of rice, jowarree, maize, and other grains. Cotton, sugar, safflower, madder, and tobacco are productions of the lower lands; and though esculent vegetables are inferior, fruits of almost all kinds are more plentiful and excellent than in perhaps any other country in the world. The domesticated animals are camels, sheep, and goats; the two first yielding valuable fleeces, which are manufactured by the people into fabrics of various kinds. About 500,000*l.* worth of British and Indian goods are imported in the year, and these are paid for chiefly in madder and other dye-stuffs, drugs, fruits, silk, tobacco, wool, sulphur, alum, zinc, lead, horses, and camels.

The leading divisions of the people are Affghans, whose language is Pushtee; Tanjiks, or those who have Persian as their vernacular tongue; Hindoos, or their descendants; and Hazarehs and Eimauks, of Tartar ancestry. But, besides these, there is such a variety of

races in smaller numbers, that at least eleven dialects are spoken vernacularly in Affghanistan. The Affghans appear to be a distinct race—not only from their speaking a peculiar language, but from their manners and institutions being entirely different from those of the neighbouring nations. They form a political confederacy; and such was in some degree the nature of their government even when they apparently submitted to Ahmed Shah, the successor of Nadir Shah, who ruled from the Oxus to the sea. Their national institutions were of a kind which could resist the influence even of an absolute monarchy. Divided into tribes, and these again into clans, the system of internal government was partly elective and partly patriarchal; with minor peculiarities keeping each chieftainship separate and distinct without destroying the general uniformity of the whole. A nation like this, so long as it remained in a state of semi-civilization, could only be united in war; and those rulers, therefore, were the most fortunate who, without tampering with their domestic institutions, led the Affghans to foreign conquest. The successor of Ahmed Shah, however, wanted energy; and after him the elevation of one of his younger sons, by means of intrigue, to the throne, was the signal for general insurrection. The eldest son, assisted by Futteh Khan, the chief of the great Barukzye tribe, became sovereign of Herat; but proving cruelly ungrateful, a feud arose between the two tribes, which resulted in Dost Mahomed, and the other brothers of Futteh Khan (who was blinded by his quondam protegé), seating themselves in three little separate thrones. We have already recorded the fortunes of Shah Soojah, the representative of the younger branch of the other, or Suddozye tribe; and it will now suffice to say, that the Dooraunee empire of Ahmed

Shah, which ever since his death had continued to crumble, fell entirely to pieces in the struggle; and that its poor remains are now governed by Dost Mahomed and his family in Cabool and Candahar,—while in Herat the throne is still filled by the elder, or legitimate branch of the deposed dynasty of the Suddozye kings of Affghanistan.

The most remarkable feature in the Affghan character is its wild spirit of independence. "We are content with discord," said an old man, in reply to the appeals of Mr. Elphinstone,—"we are content with bloodshed,—but we will never be content with a master." They are reported to be sober, social, steady, and cheerful; fond of tales of love and war, and devoted to the chase. Elphinstone sums up their character in these words:—"Their vices are revenge, envy, avarice, rapacity, obstinacy; on the other hand, they are fond of liberty, faithful to their friends, kind to their dependants, hospitable, brave, hardy, frugal, laborious, and prudent; and they are less disposed than the nations in their neighbourhood to falsehood, intrigue, and deceit." In person they are robust, lean, bony, and muscular, with high noses and cheekbones, and long faces; they are lower in stature, taking them generally, than the English, but of great strength. The women are large, fair, and handsome, and their lords do fitting homage to their charms. "I am not sure," says the same writer, "that there is any people in the east, except the Affghans, in whom I have seen any trace of the sentiment of love according to our ideas of the passion."

CHAPTER II.

CASHMERE AND THIBET.

The most eastern portion of Affghanistan, as we have seen, is the Eusufzye country; and the tribes which inhabit it are also found among the neighbouring mountains on the left bank of the Indus, where their wild habitat resembles the bed of an exhausted torrent. They are nominally under the rule of the Sikhs, who have overrun the whole territory to the north of the Punjaub, and even climbed into the celebrated and secluded vale eastward of the Eusufzyes, Cashmere.

Cashmere, ever since its *discovery*—for it is inseparably associated with ideas of romantic mystery, and takes its place in the imagination with those far and solitary isles that were for ages hidden in the bosom of unknown seas—has been the dream and the spoil of warriors. The Affghan, the Mogul, the Sikh, have by turns burst into its solitude, to revel with ruffian violence in its charms, and lose on its betraying smiles and vengeful

caresses, their pride, their courage, and their strength. It must have been an adventurous foot that first stumbled upon this enchanted vale, enclosed from the outer world by a barrier of mountains, thirteen or fourteen thousand feet in height, and some considerably more; their summits covered with perpetual snow, and even their practicable passes presenting faces of smooth perpendicular cliffs, a thousand feet high. And when the loftiest ridge was gained the mystery only became more dreadful, for no human being could have imagined that there lay, embosomed in the vast and terrible abyss beneath, a region of such supernatural loveliness as to bring the traveller Bernier to the conclusion that it was actually the site of the Garden of Eden. "From these summits," says Hugel, "one can seldom see anything of the valley, as it is concealed under the perpendicular brow which first rises from the plain. Wherever the view is directed, little can be seen but endless snow. I know scarcely any prospect more gloomy; no tree, no bird, no living creature can be beheld. Everywhere there reigns a terrific silence, and the name of *Raan*, 'the waste,' which the natives have given it, is admirably just."

But as the traveller descends the sights and sounds of animal life break gradually upon the stillness of the air. A huge cloud-like vulture perhaps rises heavily from some mountain-peak, reminding him of the roc of Arabian romance; and by-and-by the black variety of Hindostan, or a deep brown eagle, or the bearded vulture of the Himalaya, sails majestically past, shrieking as he flies. A brown bear, of the length of a tall man, looks down upon him from the steep, but turns quietly away if unmolested; or the smaller, but fiercer black species leaps upon his path as if to dispute with him the pass. Presently a

gay-coloured leopard is seen glancing through the trees; or a herd of large stags, startled by his footsteps from their sequestered valley, bound wildly through its gorges; or the gazelle, the ibex, and the musk-deer, alarmed perhaps by the cry of the felon jackal, fly upwards or downwards, as their habits lead them; while the wild goat climbs out of sight more slowly, encumbered as he is by a pair of horns four feet long, and of a weight which a man can with difficulty carry on his shoulders.

Nor is the vegetable kingdom found less interesting. Birch and alder trees meet so closely the limits of perpetual congelation that their branches are weighed towards the side of the steep with snow. At twelve thousand feet above the level of the sea, the Himalaya cedar begins, attaining at a lower altitude a circumference of more than thirty feet, and gilding the whole forest with its rich yellow garlands, which in turn, scattering their dust upon the ground, carpets it with gold. Numerous other pines present themselves in turns, together with the wild chestnut tree far exceeding these in height, and the poplar and lime rising likewise to a gigantic size.

Numerous gorges are now seen opening from the mountains above into the abyss, and projecting long smoothly swelling undulations of land between; and here and there water-courses, from the rill to the torrent, glitter through the trees, and break drowsily the stillness of the air. But the mystery is still unsolved; the valley, for aught the traveller can discover, may be either the crater of some vast volcano, or the bed of some dark and silent sea; for it is now the season when the enchanters, described by Marco Polo as inhabiting it, hide the face of nature by their sorceries. The sun shines intensely bright in the heavens, and the snowy moun-

tains return the blaze as if from polished silver; the edges of the rocks, and the tops of the forest trees, are sharp and crisp in the clear atmosphere; but an impenetrable haze overspreads the gulf into which the traveller is descending.

At this moment some rain falls—or some snow, melted and evaporated, perhaps, before it gains the ground—and the spell is broken. The haze is not torn and scattered by the wind, but suddenly disappears, as if by the magic to which its origin is ascribed by the Venetian traveller, and discloses a rich plain at the bottom, of an emerald green, variegated by lakes, and threaded by a hundred streams, into which the mountains, or the hills supporting their bases, sweep undulatingly down, covered with rich groves or verdant pasture, and conferring a romantic grace upon a scene which would otherwise be only beautiful.

But this picture, it will be observed, can only give an idea, faint though it be, of a scene in small enough compass to be taken in by a single sweep of the human vision. The mere plain of Cashmere, however, is seventy-five miles in length, by forty in breadth; and this forms but the bottom of a stupendous basin, of which the top—or the culminating ridge of the mountains which surround it—is a hundred and twenty miles long, and seventy miles broad: the whole having a superficial area of between four and five thousand square miles. This basin, according to the most minute, and therefore perhaps the most accurate, of its observers, forms a regular oval of snowy summits; although, for about a fifth part of the circumference, its higher edge is interrupted and continued by a lower range. Some writers suppose the valley to have been originally formed by the falling in of an exhausted volcanic region; while others

recognise in its conformation the truth of a popular tradition, that it was once the bed of a lake. Both hypotheses may be true, though referring, of course, to different eras of the globe; but this at least is certain, that the frequent earthquakes experienced in our own day, and described by Abul Fazel two centuries ago, attest the continued agency of volcanic fire.

The plain being almost perfectly level, is completely irrigated by the windings of the Jailum, one of the Punjaub rivers forming ultimately an important part of the Indus; but connected with this stream are three lakes, one of which is nearly twenty miles long, by about half that breadth. Besides these waters there are the numerous streams that feed the Jailum descending from the snowy mountains, and various small and beautiful tarns dotting here and there the emerald green of the plain with silver. The general character of these waters is profound repose—for rarely a breath of wind disturbs the slumber of Cashmere. The extensive surface even of the Walur lake, a traveller tells us, "is at no time rippled by a wave; and a boat passing over its mirror-like surface leaves a trace extending for miles, until lost on the distant bank." It does happen, notwithstanding, that an exception occurs to this calm of nature. An instantaneous blast descends from the mountains, and lashes lake, river, or tarn—whichever it strikes—into a sheet of foam as white as the crests of the Panjal; and then, dying as suddenly as it was born, leaves everything as calm, and silent, and slumbrous, as before.

But although the atmosphere is in general still, Cashmere is by no means the sleepy paradise of the merely voluptuous. Its greatest charm consists in its variety. On the northern side of the basin, the mountains fling

themselves into the vale in terrific precipices, down which the torrents from the region of perpetual snow rush headlong, or plunge over the steep in waterfalls; while on the southern side the ridges gradually descend, crowned with their gorgeous trees, and with green table-lands between, as smooth and level as an artificial lawn, and carpeted with grass of astonishing richness and verdure. In addition to the animals we have mentioned as inhabiting the higher lands, the flying squirrel is here seen darting from branch to branch; the aristocratic heron, whose feathers distinguish the turbans of the Sikh chiefs, is kept in colonies; the gigantic crane stalks along the banks of the Jailum; the notes of the bulbul, here the friend and fearless associate of man, are heard ringing through the groves, rivalled, and perhaps outdone, by the song of a beautiful kind of thrush. A thousand other small birds people the woods; but the purple butterfly of Cashmere, "the insect queen of eastern spring," appears to be only a figment of the imagination.

The lowlands are also adorned by trees, some indigenous, that are not found on the mountains. Of these the chunar is the most common, a grove of them intermingled with poplars having been planted by the Mogul emperors in every village. Roses and other flowers are reared in endless profusion, and a vast variety of annuals spring wild from the sod. Most of the fruits known in Europe attain to perfection, except the orange, lemon, fig, and olive. Of the water-nut that grows in the Walur lake, sixty thousand tons are raised every year. They are eaten raw, and dressed in a variety of ways, and form from choice the food of twenty thousand healthy persons, who sicken on any coarser fare. Cucumbers and melons are cultivated on floating islands on the lakes, and great numbers live entirely on them during the season.

The beans of the water-lily are also eaten in great quantities; but rice is the general food of the people.

Saffron is produced from the crocus in such quantities as to supply nearly the whole of Hindostan: but the fleece of the goat and sheep, both of home and foreign produce, and even of the yak and dog of Thibet, afford the most celebrated article of Cashmerean traffic. It is only the soft down under the hair which is used in the manufacture of shawls, a pair of which of the finer kind, according to Hugel, amounts at prime cost to 200*l.*, viz., 80*l.* for the labour of twenty-four artisans for twelve months; 30*l.* for materials and dyeing; 70*l.* for duty; and 20*l.* for the charges of the establishment. Gun and pistol barrels, of extreme beauty and great value, are also manufactured here; leather of excellent quality prepared for saddlery; and paper finer than any in India made of the filaments of the wild hemp-plant. The attar of roses, composed of the oil which floats on the doubly distilled water, is the finest in the world, but never finds its way into Europe. Six hundred pounds weight of the flowers are required to produce a single ounce. These and other exports to Ladakh, Affghanistan, the Punjaub and other parts of India, are estimated at 400,000*l.*, while the imports are set down at only 50,000*l.*

The natives of this celebrated region are the finest specimens extant of the Indian race to which they belong. The men are tall and symmetrically formed, and, in consequence perhaps of their symmetry, immensely strong. The women are voluptuously full in the figure, but exquisitely proportioned; in complexion they are delicate brunettes, but with cheeks blooming like their own roses; their teeth are remarkably fine, and their eyes are large, clear, and dazzlingly bright. Both sexes are

ingenious, lively, and good humoured, fond of amusement and devoted to pleasure; but, on the other hand, they are said to be insensible to manly honour or womanly virtue. In summer, the females bathe twice a day in the nearest water, on which occasions they merely wreathe their light loose dress round their heads in the form of a turban, and go in naked, if it should be in the midst of a crowd of spectators. One is sorry to believe that a moral taint contaminates the physically beautiful; and it gives us pleasure to remember that the men were once bold and warlike, till their spirits were broken by foreign tyranny, and they gradually acquired the vices of slaves. As for the women, their beauty has not been their own since it first attracted the ruffian lust of the conquerors of their country; but in the matter of taste referred to, it is wonderful how ductile are the laws even of female delicacy. We have ourselves seen the same exhibition made by the Russian women, not merely in the neighbouring ponds and lakes, but within the precincts of the crowded city of Moscow.

In 1586, Cashmere was conquered and annexed to his dominions by the emperor Akbar; and its pleasures, it may be supposed, contributed not a little to enervate the Moguls, and render them incapable of retaining the throne of the east. Ahmed Shah followed in 1752; and it was wrested from the Affghans by the Sikhs in 1819. The last-mentioned conquerors found a population of eight hundred thousand; but since then an earthquake swallowed up twelve hundred persons—a pestilence followed, which carried off one hundred thousand more; and a famine last, so late as 1833, which reduced the total number to two hundred thousand.

The Cashmerians are Mahomedans, chiefly of the Sooni sect, with about twenty-five thousand Hindoos of

the Bramin caste, and two thousand Sikhs. The principal language of the country is a dialect of Sanscrit. The fate of Cashmere is melancholy. In 1809 its capital was reckoned the most flourishing city in the Affghan empire—it is now a place of ruins, retaining hardly a fourth part of its population. The whole valley, indeed, is covered with memorials, but of an earlier date, when it appears to have been a favourite haunt of the shapeless but magnificent idolatry of the Hindoos. To-day the people are as superstitious as ever, but without any feeling of religion; and they see only elves and fairies dancing round the relics of the past.

Eastward of Cashmere, following the line of the Himalaya on the frontiers of India, a vast country stretches to the frontiers of China. Seated on the loftiest mountains in the world, surrounded by ice and snow, and offering none of the ordinary temptations to curiosity, Thibet is at this day almost a *terra incognita*. It is separated from Hindostan by the independent states on the southern slope of the Himalaya, and on the other side is lost in the wilds of Mongolia,—the original seat of the Huns, Turks, and Moguls, the conquerors of Asia and Europe and the overthrowers of the Roman Empire, who have so often emerged from their wildernesses to revolutionize the world, and then as suddenly returned, and been as completely forgotten as if they had been swallowed up in the Desert of Kobi.

But although the stupendous table-land of Thibet is set apart from the rest of the habitable earth, it is a holy place to the wilder tribes of Asia, who have received from it their religion and its consecrated language. It is the country of the great Llama, that extraordinary incarnation which is the connecting link between the souls of men and the Deity.

This country is usually divided into Little Thibet or Bullistan, Middle Thibet or Ladakh, and Great Thibet or Southern Tartary. The first is separated on the north from Chinese Tartary by a range of "icy mountains," and is bounded on the south by the Hindoo Koosh and Ladakh; while Ladakh, following the southerly and easterly line of the Himalaya, meets Great Thibet about the point where the Nepaul dominions begin on the Indian side of the mountains. This vast region is inhabited by the same Thibetan race, but in some degree modified both in moral and physical respects by the influence of circumstances. The inhabitants of Little Thibet show an intermixture of Persian and Hindoo with their Tartar blood, and are Mahomedans of the Shia sect; those of Ladakh have benefited in personal appearance by their marriage with the women of Cashmere, and are Buddhists in religion; and the Great Thibetans, whose Grand Lama is an object of reverence to the whole Buddhist world, bear some token of their intercourse with the Chinese. All, however, retain certain ineffaceable characteristics impressed by their geographical position, seated, as they are, on a rugged and almost barren table-land, shut in from general intermixture with other nations by mountain barriers, sometimes, as is the case in Ladakh, attaining the enormous elevation of thirty thousand feet.

The Thibetan year has three months of hot weather, when the mountains seem to rend with thunder; three of rain, when the lakes swell and the torrents rush and everywhere is heard the roar and tumbling of waters; and six of cold, when the inhabitants crowd together in the sheltered valleys and in caves among the rocks, and when the aridity of the atmosphere is so great that the plants may be rubbed to dust between the fingers. Notwithstanding the high latitude of this country, rice will

not grow in such a climate, and the quantity of wheat is too scanty for it to serve as a common article of food. Barley and coarse peas afford the heaviest crops, and turnips and radishes the only esculent vegetables, and to rear these productions the low lands are purposely flooded on the approach of winter that the ice may prevent the scanty soil from being swept away by the wind.

There is a stunted herbage, however, found even in the wildest districts, which supports astonishing multitudes of birds and beasts, and more especially large droves of the yak, which, having the size and strength of an English bull, is advantageously converted into a beast of burthen. From its long bushy hair are manufactured ropes and tents, and the female gives abundance of milk. Its favourite haunts are the slopes of the Himalaya between Thibet and Bootan, and there great herds of them are tended by tribes of wandering Tartars, who lead them, as the season varies, from the northern to the southern side of the mountains. Loaded with the hair, the tails (which are the chowries, or fans, of India) and the butter preserved in skins or bladders, of its species, the yak is driven to distant markets with its own produce, which is an article of merchandise throughout the whole Tartarian region. The sheep is as useful to his masters as the yak. His flesh is the chief animal food of the country, and is reckoned by Turner the finest mutton in the world ; and he carries to market not only his own skin which, with the wool on, is used for a winter garment, or the fleece manufactured into blankets, but likewise heavy loads of salt and grain. The musk-deer is another production of Thibet, which delights in intense cold, and haunts the line of perpetual congelation.

The mineral productions are gold, silver, lead, copper, iron, rock-salt, and borax. Gold is usually found in dust in the beds of rivers ; but metals that can only be produced

by the action of fire are of little use, unless transportable in the ore, in a country where the chief fuel is cow-dung.

Little Thibet and Middle Thibet are in the hands of the Sikhs; but the Chinese have a much firmer hold of Great Thibet. The colonial system of the latter people, which we shall have to examine in another place, is highly curious, being directly the reverse of that of the civilized nations of the west. Instead of getting everything out of their dependants they can, and giving as little as possible in return, they seek to bind them by benefits not politically conferred on them as a people, to which they would be insensible, but bestowed on the individuals to whom they are subject. The nobles, as part of the imperial regime, are paid a small salary, and the lamas and priests are supported by the government. The payment of tribute, exacted as a token of dependence, is merely an interchange of presents, always so much in favour of the payer as to make the transaction worth his while; and, finally, the daughters of the imperial blood are married to the greater chiefs with a dowry befitting their rank. This does not specially apply to Thibet, but is the general system; and it indicates the timid, or it may be the philosophical policy which values peace above dignity and aggrandizement, and estimates foreign dominion only as a means of preserving the integrity of the empire at home. The grand aim of the modern Chinese, and the acclimatized Tartars, is to build up a moral wall against the descendants of those Scythian savages whose inundations have, at one time or other, overturned every throne between the sea of China and the confines of Egypt and Germany; and Thibet is not merely important as forming the mountain barrier of Mongolia, but as exercising a magical influence over the imaginations of the whole Tartar race.

The history of Buddhism is involved in much obscurity; but without adventuring into the question of its antiquity, we may assume that one incarnation or other was compelled by the success of the Brahmins to fly from Hindostan, and take refuge on the table-land of Thibet, about six hundred years before the Christian era. To follow the fugitives into such a country would have been equally arduous and useless; and here, therefore, the sect took permanent root, and to this high place of the superstition the eyes of the votaries, dispersed throughout all the countries of the farther east, were turned in adoration or awe. At a later period, it is not unreasonable to conjecture, the heresy of a Christian patriarch of Constantinople may have strengthened the hands of Buddha, and perhaps injured the purity of his worship. The Nestorians, flying from the persecution of Rome, became the predominant power in Persia, and their doctrine was thence gradually diffused into the farthest regions of the east, and throughout the wilds of Tartary. It was hardly different, to the perceptions of the rude and unlettered nations to whom it was preached, from that of the Indian Messiah, which contained most of the moral truths of the Gospel, and nothing at variance with its spirit. But in other respects it was better adapted to impress the imagination; for by this time the religion disseminated by the fishermen of Galilee had assumed the trappings of the heathenism it overthrew; and the descendants of Nestorius, while appearing to the ignorant to preach the simple ethics of Buddha, surrounded them with all the splendour of idolatrous Rome. The consequence was that the Nestorian churches, while gradually melting away into the heathen mass around them, imbued that mass with a portion of their own characteristics; and hence, in process of time, many a

Prestor John was recognised in princes who had never heard the name of Jesus, and to this day are found, among the snowy pinnacles of Thibet, almost all the ordinances and paraphernalia of Catholic devotion—vows of celibacy, fasting, prayers for the dead, vespers, penance, rosaries, images (particularly of the Queen of Heaven), holy water, relics, bells, candles, missals, incense, shaven crowns, monks, nuns, and friars—" black, white, and grey—with all their trumpery."

Even admitting these resemblances to be mere coincidences, as some imagine, and recognising the superstitions of the east and west as catholic in human nature, it may be allowable to suggest further a curious similarity in the history of the two churches, Christian and Heathen, European and Asiatic. The Thibetan Buddhists were at first holy men of irreproachable lives, but gradually became turbulent and factious priests, till they disputed the throne with the sovereign of the country. Wars and treasons were the result, till the Tartar dynasty of China sided with its co-religionists, and the Grand Lama became both prince and pontiff. By degrees his patrons and worshippers relieved him from the temporal charge, which was so unsuited to his holy character; the offices of government and collection of taxes were managed by the Chinese; a standing body of troops was kept by them to guard the sacred person of the Lama; the nobles were salaried and the priests fed by the new masters; and at length the country was virtually placed on the footing of a colony of the empire.

The degradation of the human character under the influence of Buddhism probably arises from the lazy apathy both of soul and body it inculcates, for, in reality, there is nothing actively vicious in its doctrines. It is

supposed to have been originally a reform of Brahminism—an attempt to bring back the Indian priesthood to the simplicity of the esoteric religion; but myths and symbols, gods and temples, very soon arose from the seeds scattered in the wilderness by the virtuous recluse who was the first Buddha. His aim as a teacher was not so much to inculcate the practice of virtue as the avoidance of vice. He strove to neutralize the passions, to abstract the souls of his votaries from the cares of life, and to fix their contemplation upon *Nirwana.* To some this Nirwana seems heaven, to others annihilation; but to us it is nothing more than an obscure and, therefore, congenial idea of that "pleasant land of drowsyhead," which is the paradise of the orientals, where there is no consciousness but that of repose. It is laudable for a Buddhist to abstain from marriage, and from all worldly employments but that of receiving alms. He is to lead a chaste, sober, inoffensive life, "prayer all his business, all his pleasure praise." But his worship is in a language he rarely understands; and his most acceptable service to the Deity is the incessant repetition of words of which he never even heard an attempt to explain the meaning. When Rubruquis, the ambassador of Saint Louis to the Tartars in 1523, was in Mongolia, he met with Buddhist priests who had large idols placed behind tables covered with candles and rich oblations. These idols, however, they professed to venerate merely as images of deceased friends, asserting their belief in the unity and spirituality of God. They resided in bodies in convents, and stood in the temples in long parallel ranks, profoundly silent, but repeating mentally certain mystic and sacred words.

Perhaps this religion may have had some benign effect in softening the character of the wild tribes of the desert, among whom it has gained the ascendancy over both

Mahomedanism and Nestorianism; but in China it is neither philosophical enough for the scholars, nor practical enough for the common people, and there, we are told, it is fast sinking into disrepute. In Thibet, however, it knows no decline. Its temples are still gorgeous with gold and sculpture, while the people live under hillocks of rough uncemented stone; every family has at least one of its sons a priest; and as the traveller approaches the vast monasteries the whole atmosphere vibrates with their hymns.

Thibet was overrun by the Moguls in the fifteenth century; but its principal political events in modern times occurred during the struggle for power between the Lama and the Rajah, which was eventually decided in favour of the former by the aid of the Tartar dynasty of China. A secular prince, however, continued to reign with greater or less power till 1750, when the heir of the petty throne was executed by the emperor Keën-lung, and the government finally established on a permanent footing. But very little was known of the country in India till 1774, when the Governor-General received a letter from the Thibet government written in quality of interceder in favour of its dependant, the Rajah of Bootan, who had been chastised, and was still threatened by the British, for a trespass upon their territory. Bootan, instead of resembling the inhospitable desert of Thibet, is a region of mountains covered with eternal verdure, and cultivated, wherever cultivation is possible, like a garden; but the mediator writes with contemptuous pity of his ignorant vassal, although the general bearing of the missive exhibits much of the meekness which ought to characterize, beyond all others, a priestly governor. "As to my part," concludes the regent-lama (for the Grand Lama was then a minor), "I am but a fakeer; and it is the custom

of my sect, with the rosary in our hands, to pray for the welfare of all mankind, and especially for the peace and happiness of the inhabitants of this country; and I do now, with my head uncovered, entreat that you will cease from all hostilities with the Deh in future. In this country the worship of the Almighty is the profession of all. We poor creatures are in nothing equal to you. Having, however, a few things in hand, I send them to you in token of remembrance, and hope for your acceptance of them."

The intercession was favourably received, and it led to an intercommunication between India and its mountain neighbour, which threw some interesting light upon the character of the latter. A British envoy had even the good fortune to be presented to an infant Grand Lama, and the account he gives of the young divinity is highly curious. His predecessor, while on a visit to the Emperor of China, had "accepted to himself a severe distemper," "changed his corporal dwelling," and "retired to the eternal mansions;" but after having mourned for a stated time, the world was raised from its despair by being informed that the departed spirit had entered into the child alluded to, who thus formed a new incarnation of Buddha. Such metempsychosis, it needs hardly be remarked, always takes place into families qualified by rank or influence to govern; and the proofs are not in the present day considered incontrovertible till they are recognised by the Chinese government.

The infant Lama, who was eighteen months old, conducted himself at the audience, according to Captain Turner, "with astonishing dignity and decorum." He never looked at his father and mother who were present, but kept his eyes almost constantly fixed upon the Europeans, appearing uneasy when their tea-cups were empty,

and throwing back his head, contracting his brow, and continuing to make a noise (for we could not speak) till they were filled again. When the envoy had made his oration to the child,—for he was warned not to infer from his want of speech that he could not understand,—the little creature turned and looked steadfastly towards him with the appearance of deep attention, nodding his approbation with repeated slow movements of the head. Besides the chief lama, there is another of secondary authority, whose existence is likewise immortal; and under this class the whole body of the priesthood rise by seniority, so that the humblest brother of a monastery may hope one day to become the abbot.

In 1792, a sudden incursion of the Nepaulese into Thibet, when they plundered Teshoo Loomboo, gave the Chinese a still firmer hold of the country as they showed themselves able by their power, and the valour of their Tartar troops, to protect it. They did not content themselves with beating back the invaders, but followed them into their own country, obtained restitution of the spoil, and laid them under an annual tribute,—successes which appear the more extraordinary, if we consider the extreme difficulties the British afterwards experienced in reducing the Ghoorkas to submission. The Chinese political functionaries reside at Lassa; and having twined themselves, so to speak, round all the institutions of the country, they will probably preserve their influence till Buddhism falls completely into desuetude in China. They consult, as a matter of form, the two lamas on the affairs of their respective jurisdictions; but no appointments to offices of government or titles of nobility can take place without the sanction of the Chinese officers. It is a part of the duty of these commissioners to make an annual tour along the frontiers of Nepaul, to watch the motions of

the Ghoorkas and the English. The commercial purchases of the Chinese, are gold dust, musk, woollen cloths, lamb skin, Indian cotton, manufactures, &c.; for which they pay in silk and satin goods, brocades, tea, tobacco, &c. The country has also some trifling trade with Bootan and Nepaul, and through this with Bengal, chiefly in gold dust in exchange for cotton manufactures; and with Cashmere through Ladakh, in goats' hair, bullion, and tea, for which are received shawls, dried fruits, &c.

The Thibetans form an interesting study for the curious in national manners and character. The institution of polyandry indicates a singularly moderate state of the passions, inasmuch as the reproductive instinct elsewhere allotted to a single individual is with them divided among a whole family. The eldest son has the privilege of choice, but he shares the lady he marries in common with his brothers, and the whole live amicably together. The higher classes do not encumber themselves even with this divided labour of housekeeping, and rarely marry at all. In such a state of society female chastity is of course not much valued till the question becomes intermingled with the rights of property. Before marriage, therefore, a woman's peccadilloes pass with little remark; but after she has entered into the fraternal copartnery, they are taken cognisance of by the law. But even here the gentleness of the Thibetan character prevails; for the frail wife receives a little corporal punishment, the favoured lover pays a pecuniary fine, and the penalty of their sin being thus acquitted they are freed from its reproach.

They appear to have no stated meals, each person eating when he is hungry; and, indeed, as cookery is in a great measure dispensed with there would seem to be

little occasion for uniformity in the hours. They eat their animal food raw from choice, not merely when the meat is cured by the juices being frozen for several months — in which case even European taste finds no great fault with the absence of cookery—but also when the animal is newly killed, and the blood gives a character of the horrible to the savage banquet. But tea is a more formal entertainment, the presentation of which is the grand duty of hospitality; it is invariably handed round on the entrance of a guest, and usually just before his departure, like paunee in India.

Marriage is indissoluble except by mutual consent, and yet there is no marriage ceremony. The friends of both parties meet, carouse and make merry, and the union is complete. Funerals are conducted with still less formality; for the dead are merely thrown over the walls of an enclosure devoted to their reception, open at the top to carrion birds and at the bottom to beasts of prey. But although they consider the bodies of these creatures a nobler tomb than those of the obscene worms to which Europeans consign their departed friends, this does not argue less honour or respect. Every year, on the 29th of October, there is held a festival for the dead collectively, and as the night descends the whole country, from the meanest hut to the proudest monastery, is illuminated with myriads of lamps. If the night is dark, the air calm, and the lights are seen through the clusters of willows burning with a clear and steady flame, the omen is held to be favourable; but if the weather be stormy, and the lamps flicker or are extinguished by the gusty rain, every heart trembles in expectation of some impending calamity.

A religious character is impressed upon the whole country by the numerous monastic establishments, the

secluded nunneries, the mendicant friars, the gorgeous processions, and resounding hymns accompanied by drums, trumpets, gongs, cymbals, hautboys, and shells, which everywhere meet the ear and eye. This table-land of the Himalaya is the throne of the incarnate Buddha, and all things attest his presence. Indeed, it is to the veneration in which the Lama is held that he is indebted for a great part of his revenue; for the pilgrims who come from the surrounding countries to worship him, rarely appear without an offering. Turner saw a party of Kalmuk Tartars watching a window of the palace for half an hour in the same attitude, with their heads uncovered and their hands pressed together and held opposite their faces. At length the incarnate deity appeared; and elevating and then depressing their still joined hands, they sank upon their knees and struck their heads upon the ground. The same motions were repeated nine times nine, and they then deposited their offerings, consisting of masses of silver bullion, and the products of the country with the proper functionary, and retired apparently with much self-gratulation.

CHAPTER III.

THE BURMAN EMPIRE AND SIAM.

Such are the countries on the frontiers of India, as this region is comprehended within the Indus the Himalaya and the sea; and we have now to trace in the same rapid manner the eastern line, where the British possessions and dependencies are less accurately defined by the ranges of mountains beyond the Brahmapootra. The Burmese empire formerly occupied fully one half of the space described as India beyond the Ganges; but by the results of the war of 1824-5, the countries of Assam in the north, and Arracan in the south (bordering the Bay of Bengal) have been added to the vast territory of Great Britain; while the smaller states between have either shared the same fate, or have been brought so far under her influence as to serve as barriers against the Burman power.

The once great and powerful empire of the Burmese, may therefore be said to be bounded on the north by

Assam; on the west by the British provinces, Mooneepoor, &c.; on the south by the sea where it receives the Irawaddy; and on the east by the Chinese province of Yunan, and the great Shan country, about one half of which is tributary to Burmah and the rest to Siam.

India beyond the Ganges, which may be loosely described as the region between Bengal and China, is divided in Ptolemy's map into the Regio Aurea in the northern part; the Regio Argentea extending thence to the southern limits of modern Burmah; and the Aurea Chersonesus, the peninsula dividing the Bay of Bengal from the Gulf of Siam. The geographer marks some places on the sea coast as emporia, but no account of the trade, or of the people with whom it was carried on, has come down to us; a circumstance the less remarkable, as a great portion of the interior of the country is still almost as completely a terra incognita as it was then. Through this quarter, notwithstanding, there is little doubt the goods of the further east continued to find their way to Europe although their course remained unknown; till at length in the beginning of the eighteenth century, what must have truly seemed the meteor-flag of Emanuel of Portugal appeared suddenly in the Golden Chersonesus, and threw a broad but fantastic light upon the extra-Gangetic countries. It is to the writers of this nation, during their brief but brilliant empire, that we are chiefly indebted for our earlier knowledge of the further east.

According to these authorities, the country we have described was divided into the kingdoms of Arracan, Ava, and Pegu, with Siam on the south and east; but from the middle of the eighteenth century, the whole region appears to have been convulsed by constant wars,—on a scale of such magnitude, if we are to believe Ferdinand Mendez Pinto, the " liar of the first magnitude,"—that at

the siege of Martaban, the defenders ate three thousand elephants, and lost six thousand pieces of artillery, together with a hundred millions in gold as the "king of Brama's" share of the spoil.

In this war the Burmans, or people of Ava (the name of their capital) acquired a supremacy over those of Pegu, which continued till the middle of the eighteenth century, when their portion changed, and they were conquered by their rivals, their metropolis taken, and their king carried into captivity. At this juncture, a Burman adventurer arose, called Alompra, and surnamed the Huntsman, who at the head of only a hundred followers originated a new revolution, distinguished from the outset by fearful massacres on both sides. In 1755 he seated himself on the throne of Ava, and in five years afterwards died, having consolidated the Burman empire by the total reduction of the Peguans.

The successors of Alompra were occupied with a successful expedition against the Siamese; and in 1767 with an invasion of their own territory by a Chinese army fifty thousand strong. This force was defeated after a conflict of three days, and every man put to the sword, with the exception of between two and three thousand who were carried as slaves to the capital. The Burmese soon after extended their authority over Assam, Mooneepoor, and other states of the north-west; and in 1784 conquered Arracan, and annexed it as a province to the empire. These successes so inflated the Burmese monarch, that, according to Father Sangermano, he formed a plan for extending his dominion throughout the whole of India within and without the Ganges, which was to be followed by the subjugation of China. He commenced with Siam, and with at least partial success; for in 1793 a treaty of peace was concluded, by which the Siamese

ceded to the Burmese the whole of the Tenasserim coast, including the valuable ports of Mergui and Tavoy. His attacks upon India were made by means of childish intrigues and absurd reports; till at length, in 1824, the war we have already described deprived the Burmese of the whole of their sea coast, with the exception of the delta of the Irawaddy.

The surface of the Burman country is irregular towards the north, but slopes down as it approaches the south, till it hardly contains a single eminence. These low lands, which belong to the Pegu district, are remarkably fertile and produce rice as abundantly as the finest parts of Bengal. This is the case more especially with the plains and valleys near the rivers. The country in general produces wheat, and all the Indian vegetables and fruits, besides sugar, tobacco, indigo, cotton, and other productions peculiar to warm climates. The Burmese, in fact, receive from their own soil everything that is necessary either for the comforts or luxuries of life.

Every month some kind of fruit is in season, and the banana furnishes its treasures all the year round. The inestimable cocoa provides them with vegetable milk, butter, oil for cooking, an intoxicating wine, a strong vinegar, oakum, ropes, cups and ladles; while the juice of another palm is crystallized into sugar and fermented into a spirit, its leaves used for paper and for house thatch, and its trunk hollowed out into water-conduits. Besides palm sugar, they possess the sugar cane. They have likewise numerous condiments, such as pepper, nutmegs, cassia, sassafras, &c., with abundance of wax and honey.

The country teems with animal life in almost all its forms: insects, from the gnat to the tarantula; reptiles, from the frog to the alligator; birds, from the sparrow to

the eagle; wild beasts, from the hare to the elephant. Some species of ants, worms, and lizards, are eaten by the people as delicacies, and are even esteemed as such by those Europeans who are able to overcome their prejudices so far as to taste them.

The mineral kingdom produces several kinds of metals, iron, lead, tin, and some precious stones, but more especially rubies. Common salt is abundant; and there are wells of the bituminous liquid called petroleum, used throughout the kingdom instead of lamp-oil, and, when united with pitch, for smearing vessels.

In the southern part of the country, or Pegu, there are only two seasons, the wet and the dry; and there the rains fall for two months, with scarcely any intermission, and accompanied by thunder and tempest. In Ava, separated from the former by a range of mountains, there are three seasons,—the hot, cold, and rainy. Of these the cold, which brings the grain harvest, is the most delightful in temperature. The new year occurs during this period; and for three days before, the people suspend their employments to watch for the descent of the god who is to have the charge of the next annual cycle; occupying themselves in the mean time—men, women, and children—in throwing water upon each other, till the whole population of the Burman empire, and even the strangers that are within their gates, are dripping wet from head to foot. There is no spring, however, to herald and temper the heats of the year. The trees drop their leaves when as yet they have hardly exhibited a token of decay, and assume their new verdure with the suddenness of magic; and the whole country is wrapped at once in the burning glare of summer. But, notwithstanding this rapidity of change, the climate appears to be very healthy.

The internal trade consists in the interchange of the productions of the two divisions of the country; and thus the Burmans and Peguans, formerly as deadly enemies as were the English and the Scottish, are mutual benefactors. The latter send rice, fish, and salt, to the former, and distribute among them the British piece goods, woollens of various kinds, and other articles imported from India,—receiving, in return, terra japonica, sugar, petroleum oil, limestone, and some manufactures. The remittances to India were formerly in teak timber, but this trade has fallen off. The Burmans have likewise an overland traffic with China; exchanging cotton, amber, ivory, gems, betel nut, and birds' nests, for raw and wrought silks, gold leaf, preserves, paper, and hardware.

Commerce, however, in a country so miserably ruled is not likely to have made much progress. The whole system of government resembles that of the worst Indian period, when the country was a prey to a graduated scale of tyrants, from the emperor down to the police officer. In Burmah the king is invested with that species of irresponsible power which is limited only by his own fears; under him each province is governed by a military commandant and council; and lower still, a hereditary civil chief resides in every district, with authority somewhat resembling that of the head man in the ancient Indian village system. The king is master of the lives and property of his subjects; the commandant has the power of life and death—for although there is nominally an appeal to the throne, this is practically little better than a legal fiction; and the head man has the collection of the taxes. Of these three tyrants, the last is in practice the best, for he is nearer the people themselves; but the king would seem to be theoretically

the least mischievous, since his share of the produce of the country, and of the foreign importations, is only a tithe. He does, however, what he pleases with his governing officers; and they being allowed no salary, but fees and per-centages at their pleasure, do the same with the people. The king is above the law. He sentences to death without any legal process, not only such persons as are guilty of capital offences, but those who have the misfortune, from any other cause, to incur his displeasure. The most perilous offence is to amass extraordinary riches, for in this case the execution of the individual and the confiscation of his property are almost sure to follow. All his subjects being, without exception, his slaves, he is himself the sole fountain of honour; and the great and wealthy struggle as vehemently for the distinction of serving him, as do the nobles of the Court of Great Britain for the nominally menial offices near the person of the queen. Among other privileges, his Burman majesty selects any female he pleases for the honours of the zenana; but here custom controls despotic power, and he must limit his choice to the unmarried. This restriction suggests a mode of escape; and the custom has become general for girls, when still too young to excite the admiration of their master, to be secured from his power by a real or fictitious marriage.

One of the styles of the king is the "Lord of the White Elephant," there being some superstition connected with the possession of an animal of this kind. In 1805, one was captured in the forests of Pegu; and Father Sangermano describes the state with which it was brought to Amarapura, the capital. It was bound with cords covered with scarlet, and the most considerable of the nobles deputed to attend it. It was protected from the musquitoes by a silken net, and lodged in every respect like

a grandee, with tribes of servants to anticipate its wants and wishes. The people crowded from the most remote provinces to testify their respect; kneeling before the animal with their hands joined over their heads, and offering it rice, fruit, flowers, butter, sugar, and money. It was transported by the river on a raft, on which was erected for its accommodation a superb pavilion, impervious to the sun and rain, and adorned with draperies of silk embroidered in gold. The raft was towed by gilded vessels filled with rowers, and attended by innumerable other boats loaded with provisions, bands of music, and troops of dancing girls. The procession was met by the king, the princes of the blood, and the chief officers of state, at a distance of three days' march from the capital, who paid their homage and offered valuable gifts. At Amarapura it had a palace to reside in, a guard of honour, and five hundred servants; all its vessels and utensils were of pure gold; it had two gilt umbrellas assigned for its service, a distinction which it enjoyed in common only with the king and his sons; and it was lulled to sleep by the sounds of musical instruments and the songs of dancing girls. Notwithstanding all this, it died—this White Elephant — and being a female, it was buried with the honours of a queen.

Under the circumstances we have described, the courts of justice are of course hot-beds of corruption, where the worst criminal may escape if he is only rich enough to pay an adequate fine. When the offence, in this case, is so great as to require the observance of something like public decency, the accused is found guilty and led out to be shot; but it happens that the executioners, however frequently they may fire, are unable to hit their man, who is thus proved to be protected by supernatural power and set at liberty forthwith. Besides the ordinary

tribunals, any man in power assumes the right of acting as a judge and presiding, so far as he pleases, over the public peace. In Rangoon, in the early part of this century, robberies became so common that a law was passed, making it imperative upon the master of the house to produce the thief—a rule which gave rise to abuses highly characteristic of the Burmese. Among others, the case of a poor widow is mentioned, who had contrived to raise fifty crowns, by the sale of her daughter, to satisfy a creditor. On the same night the money was stolen from her box; and in the morning, when the mother, rendered frantic by the unavailing sacrifice of her child, made the street echo with her lamentations, she was carried before the nearest officer, and being unable to produce the thief, was only set at liberty by virtue of a considerable present. By such means the grandees acquire large fortunes; and as soon as their wealth becomes great enough to attract attention to their crimes, they are either put to death and their property confiscated, or else they purchase their lives by giving away their dishonest gains in bribes to the women and ministers of the king—by whom they are, in all proba bility, sent back to their old office, to heap up new treasures for new confiscations.

Every Burmese, being the king's slave, must be ready to serve his majesty when called upon; and thus the whole population are educated as soldiers, and prepared to take the field at a moment's notice. There is wonderful method, however, in this apparently indiscriminate law; for the whole nation is divided into separate corps, each under an officer of its own, and trained to the use of fire-arms, the bow, or the lance and sabre, according as its destination may be. There is also a corps of artillery, composed of Christians of the capital,

the descendants of the Portuguese. When an army is to be raised for active service, the men and money are levied by an ingenious process at the same time; for a greater number of the former are called out than is required by the war, and those who are unable or unwilling to take the field serve the state with their purse. No great sum, it is true, is actually requisite, the soldiers, being slaves, requiring no pay; but the higher officers contrive to absorb everything that is collected, and even sell those who can pay for it leave to retire, reporting the individuals as sick or dead.

When the order for marching reaches a district, the men, like the peasant apprentices of the banditti of Germany, quit at a given signal the occupations they are engaged in so instantaneously that the act might be described in the words of an historian of the Rhenish robbers:—"At these sounds the labourer left his spade, which he was just raising with its load from the earth; the ploughman forsook his team in the middle of a furrow; the mason descended the ladder after he had nearly reached the top, with his hodful of mortar on his shoulder; the blacksmith, in the midst of a blow, allowed his hammer to drop forceless on the anvil; the porter set down his load on the street and left it." Having assembled in their different corps, they poise their weapons (provided by the government) upon their shoulders, hanging from one end of it a mat, a blanket, some ammunition, and a cooking kettle; and from the other, a quantity of rice, salt, and napé or dried fish half salted and half putrid. Thus prepared, they march on foot, without baggage, or means to transport it if they had any, and with nothing more to distinguish them as soldiers than a piece of red cloth on their heads. Their food consists of rice and a stew of herbs, or more commonly of

leaves of trees cooked in water, with a little of the napé; and at night they bivouac in the open air, only surrounding themselves with a palisade of branches or thorns.

This severe training is seconded by so savage a discipline, that the officers of the corps have the power of life and death over their men. But the Burmese soldier is not only led into the field with the sword hanging over his head, but with the torch ready lighted to burn his family alive in the event of his desertion. These horrible executions have actually taken place in the present century, when great numbers of women and children have been shut up in cabins of bamboo filled with combustible materials, and fired by a train of gunpowder. The officers, in their turn, are at the mercy of the king, who punishes want of success with the deprivation of honours and dignities, and mere negligence with confiscation or death. The moral result is obvious. In success the Burmese are incarnate fiends, murdering the helpless and unresisting, and burning down hut and temple alike. They are said, by some writers, to be cowardly in action, but this appears to be a mistake. Their tactics are different from ours, as we have already seen; but, with their athletic forms and hardy habits, they want only European discipline to become formidable enemies even to an Anglo-Indian army.

The character of the Burmese is so different in peace, that cruelty is obviously superadded, or rather their natural disposition perverted, by the circumstances we have mentioned. In other points, we are told by an intelligent witness, "they display all the tenderness and humanity of polished life," extending aid to the infirm, the aged, and the sick, and observing filial piety both as a moral and religious duty. Another writer—a priest, and therefore

no friend of idolators—gives them credit for humanity, charity, religious feeling, and respect and reverence for the old. The *per contra* may be predicated from their position as political slaves. In ordinary life they are servile and timid, and therefore in the same degree proud and overbearing; they are abject in adversity, and presumptuous in prosperity; habitually false, and incorrigibly indolent.

Such is the general character we have received of the Burmese; but it will not escape the intelligent reader that Europeans are especially apt to make mistakes in judging both of the institutions of the oriental nations, and of the effect of these upon the people. As yet we are but very little acquainted with any part of the country under discussion excepting the high road from the coast to the capital. The Burmese and Peguans are two distinct nations, with different manners, customs, and languages; and besides them there are various other races inhabiting in smaller numbers the less known regions of the country. Among these, on the mountains that separate Arracan from the Burmese dominions, are the Chien, whose women have their faces tattooed like savages; to the east of these a tribe called Jo, who have the character of necromancers, and are dreaded accordingly by their Burmese neighbours; and scattered throughout the forests of Pegu the Carian devil-worshippers, who, upon the death of any inhabitant, destroy the entire hamlet as a place appropriated by the evil genius; and the Red Carian, who maintain a wild independence of all government by making their lair on mountain steeps, and in the untrodden depths of primeval woods.

The Burmese generally are of good stature, with well-formed limbs, and open physiognomies. Their complexion is an olive brown, more lightly shaded in the

women, who when young are sufficiently agreeable in their persons, and of gay and winning manners. The first child-bearing, however, is fatal to Burmese beauty; and this is supposed to be occasioned by the extraordinary treatment the patient receives: for no sooner is the infant born than an immense fire is lighted in the apartment, and the unfortunate mother stretched naked before it—there to be scorched, blackened, and tortured for ten or fifteen days.

The dress of the men consists of a piece of striped cloth, usually cotton but sometimes silk, and from eighteen to twenty cubits in length, tied round the middle and hanging to the feet; and in addition to this, on occasions of ceremony they wear an open shirt or tunic reaching to the knee. The women have a broader cloth round the waist but open in front, so that in walking the leg and part of the thigh is exposed; and when visiting or attending the pagoda, in addition to the tunic they throw a mantle of silk over their shoulders. Both sexes take great care of their hair, anointing it constantly with the oil of sesame; the men fastening it on the crown of the head with a handkerchief, and the women simply tying it with a red ribbon, and letting it roll down behind in dark and glossy folds. The teeth are dyed black from their earliest infancy. All have such a passion for ornaments that it is restrained by sumptuary laws; only the royal family, or the wives of high officers, being permitted to wear stuffs brocaded with gold or silver flowers, or anklets of gold: necklaces, bracelets, and ear and finger rings, however, are universal in both sexes, and are generally composed of gold and gems. The men are addicted to a more extraordinary and less obvious ornament—tattooing the thighs, and sometimes likewise the legs.

Their houses are in general merely bamboo baskets covered with straw and supported by poles; but the grandees have mansions of teak wood supported by pillars of the same material, and of a shape determined by the rank of the owner. Earthquakes could do no harm to such habitations, and at any rate are far from being common; but on the occasion of a shock the whole population make a most terrific din by shouting and screaming, and hammering on their houses with sticks, for the purpose of scaring away the evil genius who is busying himself in the bowels of the earth. Externally both huts and houses, which are alike of one story, are pretty and pleasing; but within all is dirt and confusion. The bed is in general nothing more than a mat spread on the ground, with one or two cotton coverlets. A Burmese is ostentatious, but cannot understand personal comfort. His food is chiefly boiled rice and a stew of the leaves of any and every kind of bush or tree but the poisonous, flavoured with the universal napé. They have one stew which is sweet and another acid; besides a hot sauce made of the napé and red pepper.

The laws of Gaudama forbid polygamy and divorce; but all who can afford it, notwithstanding, have several wives, and almost all find an excuse for a change. The wife may be said to be bought, for a sum of money is presented to the parents; but if the latter refuse their consent the young couple proceed without it. This is what we do in Europe sometimes; but the difference is, that in Burmah perfect freedom of choice is guaranteed by the laws. In their general treatment of women, however, the Burmese are far lower in the scale of civilization than the Tartars, from whom they are supposed by some writers to be derived. The lower classes readily sell their wives or daughters to foreigners during their stay in the country,

and the connection reflects no more disgrace upon the women than if they made the money, with which they return to their homes, by legitimate trade. The inferiority of women is recognised by the laws; and when a debtor becomes the slave of his creditor till he works out his liability, it is not uncommon for his whole family to fall into the same hands. In this case, when the females are pretty, the master sometimes sells them to a licensed pander, who makes his profit in the transaction by the wages of their prostitution. The funeral ceremonies are very expensive; but they are lightened to the family by a hundred or more acquaintances joining in what in England is called a burial society, the members of which, on hearing of the death of a brother, hasten to his house with money, rice, and other necessary articles. The procession is headed by persons carrying the white clothes (for mourning) and other gifts intended for the priests and the poor. The coffin is followed by the male and female mourners—hired when there are no relatives—weeping and exclaiming violently. A sermon is preached at the funeral pile, or at the grave where the corpse is to be buried. For eight or nine nights the family and friends sit up, keeping off sleep by drinking strong tea, and passing the time in conversation or in listening to the reading of poetry or history; and a feast given to the priests and all others who have assisted at the funeral terminates the solemnities.

The Burmese are Buddhists in religion, but they deny that the doctrine or worship is to be found in its purity out of their own country, or Ceylon. Buddha, whom they call Gaudama, is not present in any incarnation as in Thibet; he has attained the state of Nirwana, and has left only his laws to be observed and his statues to be worshipped by his people. His laws are against slaying

any living thing, against theft, against lust, against falsehood, and against intoxication ; and they impose stringent prohibitions against all the lesser gradations of these sins, such as angry words, useless and idle talk, covetousness, envy, and ill-will. Charity is expressly inculcated, more especially giving alms to priests ; and likewise the necessity of meditation upon three sacred words, implying that a man is subject to the misfortunes of life and their consequent miseries, and that it is not in his own power to deliver himself from them.

The sermon of Gaudama which is the most frequently used by the Burmese priests may be reduced to these precepts :—Avoid the company of the ignorant ; give respect and honour to whom they are due ; live conformably to your station ; be prudent in your carriage, pious and modest in your words, and strive to obtain a just knowledge of good and evil ; support your father and mother ; provide adequately for the wants of your wife and children ; be pure and honest in your actions ; be charitable and humane ; observe the divine precepts ; succour your kindred in their necessities ; abstain from intoxicating drinks ; be humble before all ; be grateful to your benefactors ; listen regularly to the word of God ; be patient and docile ; seek frequently the society and conversation of priests ; be frugal and modest in your exterior ; have constantly in view the penal life beyond the grave ; and meditate on the bliss of heaven. That intrepidity and serenity of mind, it adds, which good men preserve in abundance and want, in censure and praise, in joy and distress, in popularity and desertion ; the absence of all fear or inquietude of heart ; the freedom from the dark mists of concupiscence ; and finally, insensibility to suffering ;—these are the rare gifts that remove man far beyond the reach of temptation.

Before passing to Nirwana, Gaudama confirmed all his precepts, and added the caution, *that the real adoration of God does not consist in offering him rice, flowers, or sandal-wood, but in the observance of his laws.* This is the precise meaning of the sublime passage in the Sanscrit Hitopadesa,—and it will not be forgotten that it was the mission of Buddha to recall Brahminism to its ancient purity:—"The emblem of Siva carries not virtue along with it. The soul is a river whose holy place of pilgrimage is the repression of sensual passions, whose waters are truth, whose banks are benevolence, whose waves are mercy. There perform thy ablutions, son of Pandu, for the inward soul is not purified by water!"

The priests of Buddha in the Burman empire are cloistered monks, whose duty it is to preach and to attend the dead to the grave. They do not pray for the people, or offer oblations, for all are taught to perform these offices for themselves. The convents are gorgeous buildings, and their inhabitants in general better dressed than the laymen; but they subsist by begging ready-dressed victuals, for they are forbidden to cook, or to employ persons to cook for them, or even to touch with their hands anything they have not received as an alms. They are forbidden to possess property of any kind; to wear clothes but such as are made of fragments picked up in the streets, or among the tombs; and to touch even the dress of a woman. The first prohibition, however, they evade by covering their hands when accepting gold or silver, of which they are inordinately fond; and the second by tearing fine cloth for their garments into pieces; but the third they are said strictly to observe, the most absolute chastity being considered by the whole nation indispensable in the sacerdotal state. The person of a monk is sacred, and he is an object of un-

bounded veneration to the rest of the people; not altogether undeserved, it should be said, as it is to the priesthood the Burmese youth owe their education.

The religion of the Burmese, in point of fact, contains almost the entire practical part of Christianity, and it is somewhat disheartening to think that it should have had so little effect upon the moral character of the people. But we find the same thing nearer home than India beyond the Ganges. Buddha left his statue for the worship of his followers, who may therefore suppose themselves to have a divine warrant for their idolatry; but images arose in Christianity in spite of the express commands of its Founder. The Burmese give themselves up to lying, robbery, and murder, while acknowledging these things to be deadly sins, and deploring daily their transgressions at the pagoda; but the doctrine of Christ was distorted by its professors into an excuse for their enormities, and when going forth to pillage and massacre, they wrote beneath the bloody emblem of the meek and merciful Saviour, "By this sign thou shalt conquer!"

Siam lies to the south of the Burmese territory; with the Tenasserim provinces, Amherst, Ye, Tavoy, and Mergui, stretching five hundred miles along the coast on its western frontier, Cochin China on the east, and the Malay Peninsula and the Gulf of Siam on the south. The British territory is separated from that of Siam by a chain of mountains from three to four thousand feet high; but within this line the country is a plain resembling Bengal, watered by the river Maynam and its branches, subject to annual inundations like those of the Ganges, and possessing one of the richest soils in the world. All the productions of Bengal are found here in great luxuriance, but rice, sugar, pepper, and tobacco, more especially; while in the more remote tracts, teak,

rosewood, eagle and sapan woods, grow in primeval forests. In the inland regions there are mines of iron, tin, copper, lead, and gold; and on the coast great quantities of salt are manufactured by the process of solar evaporation. These articles, together with gum, gamboge, hides, poultry, ivory, horns, stick lac, &c., form the exports of the country; in exchange for which are received opium and European goods from India, and the productions of China, the Malay ports, and America direct.

In this country the Buddhist faith appears to be somewhat different both from its Burmese and Thibetan modifications; the king having a sacerdotal character, although not equal in religious authority to that of the Grand Lama, and the people relying in a great measure for salvation upon the merits of their priests. The result is, that in Siam the royal absolutism is carried to a pitch of the ridiculous. In Burmah the people apply the word "golden," as a distinction, to the feet and other members of the king; but here they are not so presumptuously familiar as to name him at all, or even to know his name. Captain Hamilton was tried for the capital crime of having said, in conversation, that "the king had been imposed upon," and only escaped death from a failure in the proof. The power of the clergy is increased in the same proportion, and their numbers are overwhelming. The people, therefore, taking them generally, are a prey to indolence, suffering themselves to be supported by the energy of the women. This improves the condition of the latter; for although it is theoretically the same as in Burmah, the men are forced to consult with those on whom they depend, even when affecting to despise them. The rest of the working inhabitants are Chinese and other foreigners; although the native Christians, chiefly

descendants of the Portuguese, are said to be more expert at theft than any other department of industry.

The dress of the people is somewhat similar to that of the Burmese, although the cloth, instead of depending from the waist, is fastened between the legs, so as to have the appearance of Dutch small clothes. Their heads, however, are closely shaven, with the exception of a round patch between the crown and the forehead, where their hair, being brushed upright, gives them a scared appearance. But the shaving is a modern improvement; for in the beginning of the last century, Captain Hamilton found them with the hair "cut within two inches of the skin, and gumm'd and comb'd upwards, which makes their head seem very big, and all in bristles like a boar's back." The men are described as morose and unamiable, but the women lively and cheerful; the former of an olive and the latter of a straw complexion, tinged occasionally with a little red. The Siamese, although indolent in peace and cowardly in war, are expert in gold and filigree work, and cultivate poetry and romance with some success. In the city of Pegu, Symes witnessed a dramatic performance, in which the principal actors were of this nation, and he praises highly their talent.

The history of Siam, so far as it is known in Europe, relates chiefly to its wars with the Burmese; although in 1684 an inferior servant of the East India Company became prime minister for a few years, till he was executed and his master dethroned and murdered. In later times the Siamese extended their territory for some distance into the Malay Peninsula, but with no other apparent object than that of obtaining slaves; which they are described by Mr. Earl, in 1837, as prosecuting with circumstances of great atrocity.

The Tenasserim provinces of Great Britain, though

lying along the coast of Siam, are somewhat different, both in moral and physical character, from that country. The territory is traversed by mountain-ranges, with intervening plains of great extent, each forming the valley of some river or stream; and the green expanse relieved here and there by isolated limestone-rocks, resembling prodigious edifices. These plains are well adapted for paddy cultivation; while the annual inundations of the rivers, covering the soil in their immediate vicinity with a rich alluvium, render it a garden of cotton, tobacco, and indigo.

The British found a population of only seventy thousand, which has since then doubled itself. The people exhibit few of the vices of the Siamese character, excepting indolence; and even this is proved to arise from circumstances not constitution, by their being able to conquer it whenever a sufficient inducement occurs. Their exports at present are rice and teakwood, with birds' nests and other articles for the Chinese gourmands; and their imports chiefly British piece goods and woollens, that have latterly found their way, through Moulmein the capital, to the great Shan country, which promises to become an important market. For the territory itself, with its free ports, salubrious climate, productive soil, and treasures of iron and coal, nothing is wanted but hands to occupy the land to render it one of the richest of the Asiatic provinces of Great Britain.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MALAY PENINSULA AND THE INDIAN ARCHIPELAGO.

According to physical geography, the Malay Peninsula commences between the British provinces of Tavoy and Mergui; but the Siamese possessions extend southward of the Tenasserim coast to a distance not well defined, although the Malay nation is first met with, as the great body of the inhabitants of the country, at the Tring River. The British colonies of Pinang and Malacca are on the western coast, and that of Singapore at the southern extremity; but before noticing these, it will be proper to consider the Peninsula as a portion of the Great Indian Archipelago, with the view of fixing its relative position, and exhibiting its importance to a country assuming the commercial dominion of the eastern seas.

The Archipelago covers an area, including land and water, of between five and six million statute miles; but, in addition to the vast extent of the region, it is not

only a portion of the ocean highway between the civilized nations of the east, from the Arabian Sea to the Sea of Japan, but it lies midway between these and the Australian continent. Its eastern extremity is computed by Crawford to be only three days' sail from China, and its western not more than as many weeks from Arabia; but a quarter of a century has elapsed since then, and the maritime world is under a new dispensation, which has diminished weeks to little more than days, and days to little more than hours. Of the component parts of the Archipelago, it may be sufficient to say here, that they consist of three of the largest islands of the globe; one island, and a peninsula of the second rank; three islands of the third rank, equal in size to any of those of America; sixteen of the fourth rank; and a host of smaller isles and islets, which have never been named. "According to skilful and intelligent mariners, who have made the voyage," says Marco Polo, "it contains seven thousand four hundred and forty-eight isles, mostly inhabited. In all these there grows no tree which is not agreeably fragrant and also useful, being also equal or superior in size to lignum aloe. They produce also many and various spices, including pepper as white as snow, also the black. They yield also much gold, and various other wonderful and costly productions." All these are grouped into lesser archipelagos, with now and then a large island between. One of this class, Sumatra, forming the western side of the Straits of Malacca, is the western boundary; and the whole is grasped at the same moment by the Indian Ocean, the Great Pacific, and the China Sea.

The western boundary has two approaches, the Straits of Malacca, and the Straits of Sunda; the latter between Sumatra and Java. The southern has numerous and,

from the contiguity of the chain of islands, very narrow inlets; and the eastern, a variety of wide passages, as they are termed on this boundary, taking their names from the great islands, such as New Guinea, Gilolo, Mindanao, and Luçonia. The direct line of thoroughfare through the Archipelago from the Straits of Sunda, lies between the islands of Billiton and Banca between Sumatra and Borneo, and thence along the western coast of Borneo.

The equinoctial line runs through the centre of this region; and the whole of the Archipelago is comprehended within the tropics. The similarity of character, however, which runs throughout, is not without some obvious distinctions; and Crawford has endeavoured to describe these geographically, although, perhaps, only with partial success. He supposes the Archipelago to be divided into three longitudinal portions; the most northerly of which comprises the Philippine islands; the central, the eastern angle of Borneo, the island of Mindanao, and the Sooloo Archipelago; and the southern the remainder of Borneo, with the Malay Peninsula on one hand, and Celebes, and the other islands in the same parallel, on the other.

This great southern division, he subdivides likewise into three; the first beginning at the Indian continent, whence civilization was diffused, and comprising the Malayan Peninsula, the islands of Java, Bali, Lombok, and about two-thirds of the western part of Borneo, up to the parallel of longitude 116° east. Here the soil is fertile, the people comparatively far advanced in civilization, and their food rice. The second division has Celebes for its centre, with the whole chain of islands from 116° to 124° east longitude, and the east coast of Borneo, within the same limit. Here the type of civilization is inferior, and the soil less adapted for the

higher qualities of grain; the food of the people, although still principally rice, being partly sago. The third division comprehends the spice islands—the native country of the clove and nutmeg: where the people are of a still lower grade in civilization, and where their food is no longer rice, but sago exclusively. In the central of the grand divisions,—east Borneo, Mindanao, and the Sooloo Archipelago,—nature begins to recover, as well as the most eminent of her productions—man; and the people, although inferior to those of the first two subdivisions of the west, are superior to those of the third, and their food is more of rice than sago. The northern division, or the group of the Philippines, is within the region of the hurricanes, from which the rest of the Archipelago is exempt; the soil is of extraordinary fertility, although incapable of producing the finer condiments and fruits of the other regions; the food of the more civilized races is rice; and the people generally are wholly different in manners, institutions, and language from the rest of the islanders.

It is usual to consider the islands of the Archipelago as the summits and plateaux of submarine mountains, which are merely a continuation of one of the chains that intersect the continent of Asia; but we shall find them very different in character from any we have as yet met with. Being so near the line, they possess the peculiarities of intertropical countries, with some exclusively their own. Their mountains are all volcanoes; they are in most places clothed with forests of gigantic trees, burying the earth in what might seem eternal gloom; they have neither deserts of burning sand, nor grassy plains for the nourishment of cattle; and the comparatively tranquil seas from which they rise are moved only by winds and currents of a known and uniform direction. The Archi-

pelago, therefore, is at present a country of hunters, mariners, and fishermen; but, from its geographical position and natural advantages, it is destined to become the seat of a great commercial empire. "Their boats and canoes," says the admirable historian of this region, "are to the Indian islanders what the camel, the horse, and the ox, are to the wandering Arab and the Tartar; and the sea is to them what the steppes and the deserts are to the latter." This would point to their destiny, without the analogies of experience. The permanent dominion, founded even by the mean and huckster-like policy of the Dutch, will one day be eclipsed by the energy of some other maritime nation of the west of more large and generous views; and the Indian mariners will become merchants instead of pirates, and instead of creeping within the circle of their thousand isles, their flag will be seen in the farthest emporia of the Asiatic and Australian continents.

The aboriginal inhabitants of this region, we are told, are of *two* races, one of a yellowish-brown complexion, and the other of a sooty complexion; the former bearing some resemblance to the Tartar, and the latter to the negro. But we have ourselves some doubt of this fact, for Nature in her distribution of mankind seems to be governed by fixed laws; and even in southern Africa, the intermingling of the two opposite and antagonistic races is, in all probability, of a comparatively recent date. The blacks and browns of the Archipelago are natural foes; and the position of the latter is apparently that of a people superadded by conquest to the indigenous inhabitants of the country. The browns are masters; the blacks slaves or fugitives. The browns occupy the coasts and the valleys; the blacks the mountains and forests of the interior. The browns possess those islands

which, from soil and other circumstances, repay culture or commerce; and the blacks are found in greatest number at the outskirts of civilization, till towards New Guinea, the farthest boundary of the Archipelago, they are the sole inhabitants.

The following is Symes's description of the oriental negro, which is allowed, by Crawford and others, to be perfectly accurate :—" The Andamaners are not more favoured in the conformation of their bodies than the endowments of their minds. In stature they seldom exceed five feet; their limbs are disproportionally slender, their bellies protuberant, with high shoulders and large heads; and, strange to find in this part of the world, they are a degenerate race of negroes, with woolly hair, flat noses, and thick lips; their eyes are small and red, their skin of a deep sooty black, whilst their countenance exhibits the extreme of wretchedness, a horrid mixture of famine and ferocity. They go quite naked, and are insensible of any shame from exposure." The type here, it will be seen, is taken from the Andamans, islands actually within the Bay of Bengal; and the same oriental negroes are found in the interior of the Malay Peninsula, as well as scattered throughout the rest of the Archipelago. But wherever they are met by the brown race, they are looked upon as their natural property, and are either reduced to a state of slavery or hunted down like wild beasts. At first sight this might seem to be merely the tyranny of the strong over the weak—the succumbing of spare and puny frames under those of better proportions; but even in the present advanced stage of civilization, the same antagonism of races renders Africa the prey of the world, although there the negro is next to the European in vigour: and terrible and humbling as the idea may be, we are irresistibly

driven to the conclusion that human beings, in their intercourse with each other, are governed by instincts and antipathies identical with those of the brutes.

Supposing the brown race to be of foreign origin, they appear to have degenerated in the Indian islands; and the same physical circumstances which produced a tribe of inferior negroes, have acted upon their conquerors. Their medium stature is four inches less than that of Europeans, and they have smaller pretensions to beauty, even according to their own standard of taste, than any of the continental nations we have as yet examined. Dampier's description of the inhabitants of one of the islands may be taken as the type of the whole.—"The Mindanaoans, properly so called," says the illustrious traveller, "are men of mean stature, small limbs, straight bodies, and little heads. Their faces are oval, their foreheads flat, with small black eyes, short low noses, pretty large mouths; their lips thin and red, their teeth black yet very sound; their hair black and straight; the colour of their skin tawny, but inclining to a brighter yellow than some other Indians, especially the women."

In the islands of Java, Sumatra, and Celebes, the chief tribes of this somewhat ungainly family are located, and such civilization as they attained to has radiated thence over the other islands. The history of the Javanese, the farthest advanced in knowledge, has not been explored farther back than the twelfth century; and even then it is neither clear nor interesting till the end of the fifteenth, which was signalized by the establishment of Mahomedanism on the ruins of some form of Hindooism. At a much earlier date, however, we have at least a glimpse of this island, in the narrative of Fa-heen, a Chinese traveller of the beginning of the fourth century of our era. According to this authority, the religion of Java

was then Brahminism ; a faith which was subverted either wholly or in part by the Buddhists, who began to fly from India before the rival sect in the following century. From the dawn of authentic history, at the introduction of Mahomedanism, the annals are such a tissue of vice and crime as is rarely to be met with even in the polluted archives of history; and it gives us satisfaction to find that the actors are too mean and obscure to require our attention. The Portuguese arrived in 1511, and the Dutch in 1595. The conquest of the British in 1811 has already been described, and the restoration of the island by them to the Dutch in 1816.

The Malay Peninsula is not, as might be supposed, the original country of the Malay nation. This sailor people, who are to be found on all the coasts of the Archipelago, and sometimes with no other connection with the things of the land than the roving bark, which is the habitation of themselves and their families, are from the interior of Sumatra, where their ancestors, enclosed by mountain ranges, never heard of the ocean but in the marvellous reports of travellers. This emigration is not an event of ancient date. It took place, in all probability, so late as the year 1160 ; but the Malays, although not actually destitute of historical compositions, have no record which relates the circumstances which compelled or induced them to so extraordinary a step. The lands in their own territory may have become overstocked by the increase of population, or political events may have converted a portion of the people into outlaws and refugees ; but, however this may be, the fact is certain, that this inland race, instead of merely crossing the rivers which bounded their territory, and spreading themselves on either hand over the surface of their native country, descended one of the great streams to the sea, and

threading their way through the innumerable isles and islets that there stud the ocean, crossed to the opposite side of the strait, and founded Singapore on its south-eastern extremity.

Singapore remained the capital of the emigrants for about a century, till at length, in 1252, they were expelled by rival adventurers from Java, and retiring along the Peninsula, founded Malacca on the western coast. About 1276, they were converted from Hindooism to Mahomedanism, and in that year the first Mussulman prince mounted the throne. The Peninsula, being almost uninhabited, was, in process of time, fully settled by the Malays, and was supposed by strangers to be their original country. From this colony (not from Sumatra) successive swarms were thrown off to so many of the islands, that the Malay tongue, which is of singular simplicity of construction, became to a considerable extent the commercial language of the Archipelago.

The tribes of Celebes, and more especially the Bugis, are at present the Phœnicians of these seas, and would, in any part of the world, be reckoned an enterprising race of mariners. Their history, however, is still more obscure than that of the Javans and Sumatrans; and it was not till a century after the arrival among them of the Portuguese that they were converted to Mahomedanism. The people of these three islands, and the oriental negroes, form the mass of the inhabitants of the Archipelago; although there are also, in various places, such as the interior of the Philippines, various other tribes, that neither in language nor manners present any affinity with the predominant races.

The intercourse of Europe with the Archipelago has, till very recently, been a series of detestable crimes, which it will take ages of beneficence to expiate. If the wealth

of these remote islanders had consisted in the precious metals, they would have been robbed like the Americans and those who resisted extirpated; and the invaders would then have either retired, or have settled quietly down as colonists. The treasures, however, which tempted them were the productions of the soil, for which, from time immemorial, an eager appetite had existed in the whole western world—an appetite hitherto stimulated rather than gratified by the scanty supplies obtained through the successive agency of the Phœnicians, the Egyptians, and the Venetians. These treasures depended upon the labour of the natives, an industrious and commercial people; and it became the interest of the strangers to subdue without utterly destroying them, to grind them down to a level with the soil without burying them beneath it, and to obtain the things they coveted by the sweat and the tears, but no oftener than necessary by the blood of the natural owners of the country.

In 1511 Alphonzo Albuquerque, at the head of eight hundred Portuguese, and six hundred Indians from the coast of Malabar, captured Malacca, the capital of the Malays, an entrenched city defended by thirty thousand natives; the invaders loosing only eighty of their number in the assault. Only two years before this the flag of Don Emanuel had been seen for the first time in the Archipelago; and the Portuguese had now sailed through the unknown Straits, encompassed by vast countries, swarming with a warlike population, and had coolly disembarked to carry by storm a place defended by a force twenty-five times the number of their own! But India beyond the Ganges was in the same state of disorganization as Hindostan at the conquest of the English; and Albuquerque received embassies from the kings of Java, Sumatra, and Pegu, to congratulate him upon his good fortune, and

from the King of Siam to thank him for chastising a recusant tributary. They did not long, however, maintain the good opinion of their neighbours, for Malacca was besieged or blockaded six times by the Malays, seven times by the Sumatrans, three times by the Javanese, and twice by the Dutch, into whose hands it fell in 1640.

Monsters of cruelty and avarice as were the Portuguese, they were successfully rivalled in every imaginable atrocity by the new masters of Malacca. They, however, retained their dominion till 1795, when it was overthrown by the British, but the place was restored in a few years afterwards. In 1807 it was again captured by the same power, and in 1811 the instruments of torture, such as the rack and wheel, which remained as monuments of Dutch infamy, were publicly burned by the Earl of Minto. At the peace of 1815 Malacca was once more restored to the Dutch, but in 1825 was definitively taken possession of by the British.

It was in 1521 the Portuguese first appeared in considerable force in the Moluccas, those famous spice islands whose productions first attracted the rapacity of Europe, and for which the other ports in the Archipelago were chiefly valuable as depôts and emporia. To describe the scenes of blood, treachery, lust, and rapine, that were there enacted by the Christians would be neither profitable nor pleasant; till at length the natives joined a new race of foreign tyrants, and assisted them to expel the old ones.

The Dutch proved to be worse, if possible, than the Portuguese, for they were more cunning. In 1613 they made *treaties* with the Molucca princes; and thenceforward they had the right to rob and massacre as often as they found it convenient or profitable. The Nutmeg Isles were literally depopulated in 1621, because they violated the monopoly claimed by the Dutch, by selling some of

their produce to strangers; and the Clove Islands, being more fertile in their staple commodity than suited the commercial demand, a decree was issued that cloves should be extirpated everywhere except at Amboyna. The people became desperate and flew to arms. Their chiefs were broken on the wheel, or otherwise executed, in dozens at a time; and at length the King of Gilolo being taken prisoner by accident, not in battle, was privately drowned at midnight, with twenty-five of his family. The last insurrection of the Moluccas took place in 1680, and was put down in the following year, when the Dutch at length succeeded in their darling object, for which they had perpetrated so many horrors, the regulation of the price of spices. It happened, however, just about this time, that the taste or customs of Europe changed; the consumption of the commodity dwindled away as the cost rose; and the dearly-bought Spice Islands sunk into commercial insignificance.

In Celebes, where in 1660 the people were able to fit out a fleet of seven hundred vessels, carrying an army of twenty thousand men, the Dutch were equally successful in destroying the commerce of the natives without benefiting themselves; but Java was destined to be the seat of their eastern dominion, and the principal theatre of their crimes. In 1611 their Governor-General established himself in Jacatra in the quality of a guest, but his real character being speedily understood, as well as that of the French and English adventurers, who now hovered like birds of prey among those devoted islands—to strike their quarry wherever they found the human form, and rend each other for the carcase—a general rising took place among the princes of the Archipelago, with the object of expelling the Dutch, as the most powerful banditti of the three, This *conspiracy*, as it was insolently

called by the Europeans, was unsuccessful, for the usual reason, that the half-civilized conspirators had not sufficient public virtue to be true to themselves. The Dutch took Jacatra by assault, and put all the male inhabitants to the sword, with the exception of a few who saved themselves by flight; the number of the latter including the king, who eventually sank to the station of a humble fisherman in those waters where his flag had once been obeyed. The conquerors then founded the new town of Batavia, which, under the influence of European capital, intelligence, and industry, very soon became a great emporium.

The first danger of the Dutch was from the Sultan of Mataram, the most powerful of the Javanese princes; who, on two successive occasions, sent an army of upwards of one hundred thousand men to besiege the capital, which was then nothing more than a fortified factory, inhabited, in addition to the handful of Europeans, chiefly by Chinese, and defended by mercenaries from Japan. These vast armies were defeated—one, as it is stated, being utterly destroyed, and the other reduced by one-half; and up to the year 1675 the Dutch flag, thus planted in blood, continued to float in triumph over the islands of the east. But their rapacity was not satisfied. They now entered into a league with the native princes against their subjects, with the view of cutting off the latter from participating in the advantages of commerce, and of obtaining the products of their industry at inadequate prices. With the same objects they expelled the English and Danish merchants from Bantam; and having thus secured their coveted monopoly, they reaped its natural fruits—commercial poverty and ruin.

The robberies, treasons, and wholesale murders in which they were now involved for a series of years, it is im-

possible to follow in the meagre abstract to which we are confined. Extraordinary characters arose amidst the terrible pollutions of the time. Peter Erberfield, the son of a Westphalian gentleman, but bound to the oriental island by the ties of birth, and by the sentiments instilled by his Javanese mother, entered into a conspiracy to massacre the whole of the Christians in Java, and assume the government of their dominions himself. The plot was accidentally discovered, and being confessed on the rack by nineteen of the conspirators and three of their wives, the whole nineteen were executed with circumstances of the most terrific barbarity, and then public thanksgivings were offered to God in the churches of Batavia for the preservation of his people.*

We have mentioned that the Chinese were the principal inhabitants of Batavia during the siege it sustained so triumphantly from the prince of Mataram. That industrious and enterprising people were now settled in great numbers in the island, and had the misfortune to awaken the jealousy, as well as the cupidity, of the Dutch, by their wealth and power. They were marked out therefore for exactions, and executions as revolting as the horrors that were inflicted in Europe by the Christians upon the Jews ; and at length, in 1740, a number of these valuable colonists were forcibly seized and shipped off to Ceylon. Upon this their countrymen in the vicinity of Batavia flew to arms, and a bloody

* Three of the conspirators were tied to a stake and strangled; ten were nailed to a cross, and guarded carefully till death ended their sufferings, and gave up their bodies to the birds of prey ; and the remaining six were likewise crucified, but had their right hands cut off, their arms, legs, and breasts mangled with red-hot pincers, their bellies ripped up from bottom to top, their hearts thrown in their faces, and then their heads cut off and fixed upon a post, and their bodies torn in pieces and given to the birds of prey. This is an abstract of the legal sentence.

riot ensued, which was interpreted by the Dutch into the evidences of a "wicked and long-meditated conspiracy." A massacre was immediately ordered, the sailors of the fleet employed as congenial assassins, and ten thousand Chinese were dragged out of their houses and butchered, "making no more resistance," to use the words of the Javanese annals, "than a nest of young mice."

Fifteen years of treason and murder devastated Java after this terrific crime; but from the end of the contest till the conflict with the British in 1811, all was tranquillity. In spite of the commercial monopoly, and generally illiberal and injudicious government, agriculture revived and flourished, and the population trebled itself in number. The fortunes of the rulers, however, declined as those of the islanders began gradually to advance. The expense of retaining the colony much more than consumed its produce; and at length in 1795 the Dutch East India Company was dissolved, loaded with debt. From this period till its occupation by the British, Java remained unproductive to its possessors. When it returned into their hands in 1816 the old system of prescribed cultivation and forced deliveries was recommenced with a true infatuation; and the consequence was a new series of wars and insurrections, which continued up till a few years ago, and which cost the Dutch thirty thousand, and the Javanese two hundred thousand lives. But, extraordinary as the result appears, Holland has triumphed in more ways than one. By her unchangeable stubbornness of purpose she has *accustomed* the natives to her system, and they find the regularity of her payments, notwithstanding their penuriousness, better in the long run than the intermittent windfalls of eastern speculation. The island flourishes; its produce of all kind improves; and its indigo

in particular threatens to become a formidable rival to that of India in the European markets.

The settlements of the Dutch in Sumatra, Borneo, and elsewhere were characterized by circumstances of a similar kind, though not so startling in degree; but where-ever they made their appearance, it was the signal of commercial ruin and decay. In Sumatra the work of blood can hardly yet be said to be accomplished; but there is no doubt that the entire island will very speedily be under their control. Failing in their pursuit of gold and diamonds in Borneo, they had only the satisfaction of destroying the mines of the Chinese; and in their eagerness to obtain a monopoly of pepper, they turned away, by their persecutions, into new channels the industry of the natives, and almost annihilated the trade.

When Magellan circumnavigated the globe for the first time in 1521 when looking for spices, the first land he stumbled upon, after leaving the western coast of America, was Mindanao, one of the Philippine islands. He sailed thence into the middle of the cluster, and landing on Zebu, christianized that place by erecting a cross and sprinkling some water in the face of the wondering and admiring king. Magellan, however, belonged unfortunately to the church militant; and in the true style of a knight errant, he would needs accept a challenge he received from the chief of a neighbouring islet. The joust was held *à l'outrance* in a marsh, by fifty Spaniards cased in armour, and the illustrious navigator, and six of his companions, lost their lives fighting up to their necks in water. On this discovery, the Spaniards founded their claim to the Philippines, but they at first cared very little about asserting it; and even in 1581, when they took Manilla, on the island of Luzon or Luçonia, the future capital, the force which effected the

conquest amounted to only two hundred and eighty Europeans.

The cause of this indifference was, that the Philippine produced *no spices ;* and to the same circumstance is owing the fact, that these islands, unlike the rest of the Archipelago, have received benefit rather than ruin from their connection with Europeans. Having nothing to tempt the cupidity of the west, in the peculiar direction it had taken, they were governed by the Spaniards with a kind of languid illiberality, which offers a strong contrast to the active atrocity of the Portuguese and Dutch; the wild inhabitants, wherever they could be reached, were humanized even by an impure christianity; and in our time when the staples of commerce are no longer gold and spices, the Philippines will become every day of more importance. But although the Spaniards permitted and encouraged European colonization, and afforded private enterprise and competition at least *some* scope, it is not to be supposed that they were more than comparatively free from the vices of the other foreign tyrants of the Archipelago. The people were oppressed, and rose again and again in insurrection; the Chinese—the Jews of this region—were massacred in thousands, and repeatedly banished; and the Japanese, once numerous both as residents and traders, have vanished, whether with or without fault on the part of the Spaniards, from their eastern dominions.

Almost since their first appearance in the Archipelago, the Spaniards fought bitterly with the Portuguese, or the Dutch, for the Moluccas; but their only other serious conflict with a European power took place in 1762, when the British sent what must be called a predatory expedition against the Philippines under Sir William Draper. Manilla was taken with the greatest gal-

lantry, and held to ransom by this force; but the conquest had no results except as regards plunder, and that to a very small extent when compared with the hopes of the adventurers. This is a very instructive episode, if governments would only condescend to learn. In other parts of the east the loss of a great battle was decisive, and perhaps the same would be the case to-day in British India; but the Spaniards were incorporated with the people by colonization, and the only class which joined the English, even after victory, was the persecuted Chinese.

Although the affair of the "ransom of Manilla" was not the first nor the only appearance of the British in these seas, they played, till recent times, a very subordinate part in the bloody drama of the Archipelago. Even after they had formed a settlement in 1785, on Pinang, or Prince of Wales Island, on the western coast of the Malay Peninsula, their merchants traded at their own individual risk, without the protection of their government. Pinang was the marriage portion received by Captain Light, the commander of a country ship, on his union with the king of Quedah's daughter, and he made over the territory to the East India Company; but ten years later, Malacca, on the same coast, fell into their hands, although in the first instance only for a few years, by the fortune of battle. When the Dutch oriental possessions generally, however, became theirs, in the course of the great European war, the extraordinary difference in the commercial policy of the two nations became manifest, not only in the prosperity of the traders but of the whole Archipelago. Batavia became the grand emporium of the farther east; and the flags of all nations, with the innumerable barks of the islanders themselves, dotted these tranquil seas from one extremity to the

other. The British, however, inherited the ill will and suspicion which had attached to their predecessors; they were obliged to introduce their most beneficial reforms by sheer force; and whatever the result might have been had they continued masters of the island, at the end of their actual term they were losers by the occupation. But political considerations, wise or unwise, intervened. England, in a few years, abandoned her island possessions to concentrate her power on the continent. Batavia became once more the capital of *Dutch* India, and monopoly was re-established in all its rigour.

The treaty of 1824 between the two nations was dictated by the erroneous policy of the time, when an approach to sound views was called revolution, and when the ubiquitous spirit of monopoly was shrieking out "robbery!" at every unaccustomed movement, from one end of the commercial world to the other. The English would needs *protect* the produce of their own colonies against that of the Dutch colonies, and the Dutch would needs prevent the English from trading at all with their eastern settlements, except through the ports of Java; and both thought they had very cunningly managed to cripple their rival, profoundly ignorant that in the same ratio they had crippled themselves. The persecutions of the Dutch were directed in a more especial manner against British goods; and without a depôt or a *point d'appui* in the highway of the traffic, the latter nation would probably have been shut out altogether from the trade, but for the public spirit of an individual. It was determined to found a settlement beyond the Straits, for they had already Pinang and Fort Marlborough (Bencoolen) in Sumatra within them; and as Banca, which was reckoned the most eligible spot, had been given away to their rivals, it was necessary to look

out elsewhere. The Malays, it has been said, on their first immigration, founded Singapore at the extremity of the Peninsula; and in later times, it was occupied, no doubt, by the Dutch or Portuguese, as the remains of some religious buildings testify. In the year 1703, when it had perhaps been utterly abandoned, Captain Hamilton was offered the island as *a present* by the Malay prince of Johore. "But I told him," says the dashing but observant mariner, "it could be of no use to a private person, though a proper place for a company to settle a colony on, lying in the centre of trade, and being accommodated with good rivers and safe harbours, so conveniently situated that all winds served shipping both to go out and come into these rivers." This "centre of trade" was discovered anew by Sir Stamford Raffles, who literally forced it upon the East India Company; and in 1818 a settlement was founded on an island whose only inhabitants were a few seafarers, half fishermen half pirates, but which is now the grand mart of the British in the eastern seas, and, perhaps, the most thriving emporium in the world.

This step gave great umbrage to the Dutch; and as the English footing on Sumatra appeared, owing to various causes, to be of little advantage to commerce, a treaty was made in 1825, by which that settlement was abandoned to Holland, and the English relinquished their right to plant their flag, or even to enter into native alliances, in any island south of 1° 30′ north latitude. This, taken literally, excludes them from one-half of Borneo and the whole of Celebes, except the extreme northern coast; but in point of fact, these great islands can no more be said to be islands lying to the south of the line indicated than islands lying to the north—and for the same reason a portion even of the Moluccas them-

selves would seem to be left untouched by the treaty! The Dutch, however, interpret it more liberally on their own side—so liberally that they claim the whole Archipelago south of the Sooloo Sea, while the English, without insisting upon reading the treaty as if it had been framed upon the common principles of grammar, suppose themselves at liberty to place any counterpoise to the Dutch influence they please north of the line in question.*

Singapore, Malacca, Pinang, and Province Wellesley—the tract of coast on the main land beside Pinang—are under one government, called the Straits' Settlements; and although Malacca has declined in importance as a depôt, being situated between Singapore and Pinang, it shares in their prosperity, owing to the generally liberal and enlightened policy of the present day. The position of Singapore *after* the recent opening of the Chinese ports affords sufficient indication of the elasticity of its resources. The junks may stay at home, and to a certain extent have done so, since their customers have gone to them; but it is on the development of the resources of the Archipelago that the prosperity of this settlement depends—and already both Europeans and Malacca-Chinese are sending square-rigged vessels to China for productions they formerly received at their own doors. The junk trade may cease; the Dutch islands are to a certain extent sealed by the narrow policy of their masters; Manilla sends its produce home, since Spain has discovered the value of her colonies; and the nameless King of Siam has set up as a rival merchant:—but Singapore increases in her European, American, and Indian trade, and will continue to be floated

* The English do not exclude themselves by the treaty from forming settlements or alliances south of 1° 30′, but on any *island which lies to the south of that line.*

triumphantly on by the destinies of the Archipelago. The population by the census of 1845 amounts to fifty-seven thousand four hundred, one half of whom are Chinese.

It may be desirable here to give some slight sketch of the topographical system of these islands, so important to the commercial destinies both of India and Great Britain; and for this purpose we shall commence our survey with the western and southern limits in the Indian Ocean.

The sea from Cape Negrais to the northern point of Sumatra is included within the Bay of Bengal, and between these two points lie the Andaman and Nicobar clusters, the former of which is obviously the commencement in this direction of the Archipelago. The Great Andaman is in reality three distinct islands, though separated by very narrow straits. It is one hundred and forty miles long, and only twenty broad; while the Little Andaman, further to the south, is still narrower, and only twenty-eight miles long. The former has a mountain in the centre two thousand four hundred feet high, and is generally of a wild and romantic aspect; while the latter is an almost unbroken flat, covered with dense and lofty woods. The inhabitants are oriental negroes, wandering gaunt and naked along the rocks, or tumbling in rude canoes among the surges of the sea, in quest of a meal, which nature grants capriciously and in niggard quantities to their hunger. They look with dread and hatred upon all of the human kind but themselves. But these wild men have a religion. They worship the genii of the mountains, woods, and waters, and in storms recognise the voice of the Evil One as he rushes through the forest, or scatters their canoes upon the deep. On these occasions the two or three thousand miserable beings who form the population of the islands join, in their tribes and families, in screaming rude hymns to the spirit of the tempest.

The Nicobars, an extensive series of isles and islets, lie between these and Sumatra, and are inhabited by the brown race, who live in villages, with some kind of municipal regulations, and subsist by trafficking with each other, and with the passing ships, in cocoa-nuts, fowls, hogs, birds' nests, and other articles, in exchange for which they receive from Europeans cloth, silver-coin, iron, and tobacco. They exhibit also a common feature of eastern civilization in an extreme jealousy of their women; but in this they are probably even excelled by the grotesque savages of the Andamans; two females of whom having suffered themselves, when faint from hunger, to be taken on board an European ship, were in such terror on account of their chastity that the one watched while the other slept.

To the south-eastward of the Nicobars the Straits open between the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra. The Peninsula is seven hundred and seventy-five miles long, by about a hundred and twenty-five miles in breadth, and is traversed in its whole length by a range of mountains, inhabited in some places by oriental negroes in their most savage state. With the exception of the British settlements, and a colony of Bugis from Celebes, the whole country is Malayan, and the petty states into which the nation is divided exhibit every symptom of degradation and decay. Abounding in the productions of the tropics, both animal and vegetable, watered by innumerable rivers, streams, and rills descending from the mountains, and with a climate so healthy wherever the land is tolerably cleared, that Pinang is one of the chief sanatoria of Bengal—nature seems to point out this territory as an advantageous site for European colonization. At the mouth of the Straits there are Bintang, and innumerable other isles and islets, which, as well as those

southward in the China Sea as far as Natuna, belong nominally to the Malay principality of Johore.

The western coast of the Straits is formed by the great island of Sumatra, upwards of one thousand miles long, by an average breadth of a hundred and sixty-five miles, and containing nearly six million inhabitants. The north-eastern coast is divided, according to the imperfect knowledge we have as yet obtained of its productions, into three regions: that of sago, the rattan, dragon's blood and benzoin, that of black pepper, and that of the areca palm. The first of these beginning at the Straits of Banca is low, flat, and swampy, with numerous large rivers and alluvial islands; the second, though likewise low, is less moist, and has no large rivers or islands; and the third has a comparatively bold and mountainous face towards the sea. The south-western coast is uniformly well supplied with water, but the rivers are too short and rapid for navigation; and a chain of islands of considerable size runs parallel with this side in its whole length, appearing to have originally formed part of the main land. The soil is covered with a perpetual verdure of rank grass, brushwood, and timber trees, so as to form a nearly impervious forest. The whole eastern extremity of the island to the northern inlet of the Straits of Banca is described as a forest of mangroves, growing out of a morass, and throwing their arched branches into the sea, to form roots at the bottom. Oysters may be gathered from this aquatic wood, and thus the story of shell-fish growing on trees is no fable. Sometimes portions of the land are torn away by the river floods, and so thickly interwoven is the mass of roots and soil that they continue to drift about as floating islands with the wind and current. The prospect from the sea is dreary and monotonous. No tree of the forest overtops its fel-

lows, and no motion of animal life lends interest to the view—the Malays, whose lair is far up the muddy creeks, skulking from the daylight to watch for stranded vessels, and breaking, by no human sound, the preternatural stillness of the jungle. But should the winds or tides, or the singularly unequal shoaling of the shore, give a victim to their desires, all is sudden commotion in the desert, and a hundred bird-like canoes darting out of the forest into the sea, gather, as a witness observes, "like gulls about a dead whale."

In the interior, but nearer the coast on the south-western side, a range of mountains, sometimes between twelve and thirteen thousand feet high, and occasionally divided into several parallel ridges, runs from one extremity of the island to the other. Among these heights are numerous lakes and tarns, and the sources of countless streams; and this profuse irrigation of a soil naturally rich clothes the whole island with the most exuberant vegetation, and in some parts, indeed, renders it one immense forest. In the proper season, rice is raised in vast quantities, with little trouble; and the interminable groves of cocoa-nuts, betel-nuts, bamboos, sago, and other trees, require little or no attention. In the mineral kingdom there is abundance of copper, iron, and tin; gold is obtained in considerable quantities, although no mineralogical knowledge is brought to bear upon its collection; coal, but of an indifferent quality, is gathered rather than dug; and saltpetre is extracted from earth impregnated with guano. Besides elephants, tigers, rhinoceroses, and other wild animals peculiar to this climate, the ourang-outang inhabits the forests, and has been known to attain the stature of seven feet.

Near the north-eastern extremity of Sumatra, lies Banca, from which the Straits derive their name, an

island of about one hundred and thirty-five miles in length, by thirty-five in breadth, so rich in tin that when Lord Castlereagh was complimented on his generosity in making a present of it, in addition to Sumatra and the Spice islands, to the Dutch in 1814, he replied,—"Say not a word about our generosity, Baron. Do you not know that if I had kept Banca, I should have had all the miners in Cornwall upon my back in the next session of Parliament?" In the previous year, the English, by stimulating the production, had suddenly increased it to one-half the whole amount obtained from the Cornish mines. The miners are chiefly Chinese, who, with Malays, and some indigenes form the population. The last are either in a savage state, and haunt the interior of the country, or live, with their families, in their prows on the coast, subsisting by fishing or piracy, and rarely setting their foot on the dry land.

To the eastward of Banca is Billiton, a rocky and sterile island, which abounds almost as much in iron as the former does in tin.

Separated from Sumatra by the Straits of Sunda is Java, an island about six hundred and sixty-six miles in length, and varying in breadth from fifty-six to one hundred and thirty-five miles, containing a superficial area of nearly forty-six thousand square miles, and a population of about eight millions. Java was probably, in some era of the world, one vast volcano; and a few of its numerous craters, opening from conical elevations, some in the form of low hills, and some of lofty mountains, still discharge sulphurous vapours, and occasionally volcanic eruptions. In one part of the country are natural cauldrons of saline mud, the contents of which rise to the height of twenty or thirty feet, and then explode and boil over. This ebullition and explosion

continues without intermission, and the natives obtain several hundred tons of common salt annually from the liquid. Owing, perhaps, to the volcanic constitution of the island, the soil is wonderfully rich, and of unexampled depth, affording successive crops even of rice and tobacco without manure, and an indigenous botany which no quarter of the globe equals in extent and variety. From the great height of the interior, it is estimated to possess six distinct climates from the sea-shore to the mountain tops, where the productions of almost the whole world may find a congenial soil. On the other hand, the island is very poor in minerals, affording neither metals nor gems. The island of Madura, in length about ninety-two miles, by seventeen in breadth, lies off the north-east coast of Java, and exports rice, buffalo, and sheep-skins, with great quantities of bay-salt to all the Dutch colonies.

Bali is the next island of the southern chain of the Archipelago, and is about seventy miles by thirty-five. In its geology and the fertility of the soil, it resembles Java, but its iron-bound coast has no harbours nor even safe anchorage; and for this reason its inhabitants, although among the best specimens of these islanders, shun a seafaring life, and entrust their commerce to the Bugis of Celebes. Lombook, a smaller island, has the same features, excepting the repulsive nature of the coast, and a considerable trade is carried on with Java and Borneo direct by the population. Sumbhawa, one hundred and eighty miles in length by forty, is distinguished in the volcanic chain by the mountain of Tombaro, from which a terrific eruption took place in 1815. It produces teak-wood and some gold dust; and pearls are found in its bays.

Floris is an island about two hundred miles long by thirty-six in breadth, and is a link in the volcanic chain

of some distinction. On the sea-coast are Malays and Bugis, but the interior is inhabited by oriental negroes divided into petty tribes, living in a state of perpetual hostility with each other. At the western end, the small island of Sabrao is entirely inhabited by this race in the most savage stage; while in Solor, close beside it, the coasts are occupied by the Men of the Sea, who live in their prows, and deal in fish-oils with the Bugis. At the distance of a degree to the south of Floris is a low and perfectly flat island, one hundred miles in length by thirty, known to Europeans by the name of what was its chief production, Sandal-wood. The Dutch cut down the trees in the vain hope of extirpating its savage inhabitants, from whom the Bugis now obtain birds' nests and bees wax in considerable quantities, and who between whiles employ themselves in cutting off coasting vessels.

The next island of any importance is Timor, two hundred and fifty miles in length by forty, which, although a mountainous country, has no volcanos. Its chief productions are sandal-wood, copper, and gold; but the last is difficult to be obtained on account of the prejudices of the aborigines, who hold the metal in dread and its seekers in detestation. These philosophical savages have the dark complexion and frizzled hair of negroes, but in other respects resemble more the brown race. Beyond Timor, as the southern boundary of the Archipelago stretches towards the coast of New Guinea, the islands become less numerous, and almost wholly unknown except in their geographical position. The most remote is the Aroo cluster, where the bird of paradise is supposed to breed; an ornament for which European beauty is indebted to the most hideous savages in the world, who, in preparing it, cut off the legs, and have

thus unconsciously given rise to the elegant fiction which represents this denizen of the air as never touching the grosser earth during its life.

It must not be supposed that in this rapid glance at the western and southern chain which bounds the Archipelago, we have named the whole of the islands—or indeed that it is possible to name them. Even if the theory be correct which supposes this vast country to be the pinnacles and plateaux of a partially-submerged continent, it can apply only to the greater elevations; for among and surrounding these are creations of a totally different structure, and of an obviously modern origin, which continue in active growth to the present moment. There appear to be volcanic summits below the surface of the ocean as well as above, and the edges of these extinct craters are indicated, as some suppose, by circles of little islands, created by that mysterious architect of the ocean which we name the coral insect. Each of these islands is said to rest upon the summit of a slender coral pillar, and its history is thus related by an anonymous pen:—"The whole basis of the present archipelago, whether it be regarded as the wreck of an old continent or the nucleus of a new one, consists of an immense chain or succession of submarine volcanoes, which have upheaved the crust of the earth to within a short distance of the ocean's surface. Upon the summits of the cones of this ridge coral forests have sprung up, and have, in the course of time, had their interstices filled with sand and mud. Then a new growth of coral has succeeded, and been compacted by new deposits of terrene matter, till the summit of the prodigious column has projected itself above water as far as the impulse from below has been able to carry it. At this point a new process has commenced. The seeds of trees and grasses have been borne

to the mud-bank by the water or by birds, and a new principle of vegetation has succeeded to that which had been asserted by the influences of the upper air. Aquatic fowl in myriads have settled on the new-born isle, and made it their nest and procreant cradle, and supplied the richest of all manures to the rising flora of the place."

The smaller isles, in another part of the eastern ocean, are compared by Captain Moresby to "flower-pots" rising from the water; and in the seas we are now exploring the number and variety of these verdant clusters lend a true enchantment to the view. As the mariner makes the Batavian coast, for instance, he steers among myriads of islets, covered with the richest vegetation; where the native prow, with its yellow mat sails, appears and disappears every instant as it threads its way among them, or occasionally the tall white drapery of some European ship is seen rising haughtily above the trees that intervene. One of these groups is called the Thousand Isles, and wo to the traveller of the sea who finds himself in its unexplored mazes when the sun is low or the wind high! —for in these latitudes fisherman and pirate are convertible terms. But the larger fishing prow, a graceful and gallant vessel—the eagle of the Archipelago—may bid defiance to such dangers. She is of fourteen or fifteen tons burthen, with a single immense square sail, into which, when the breeze is strong, a spar is thrust to windward for an out-rigger, where some of the numerous crew sit calmly above the hissing waters to prevent their boat from being capsized by the press of sail. And the crew are worthy of that prow. Men of the sea are they, who were born on its bosom, and will be buried in its depths; men who can hand and steer but not reef, and under whose guidance the vessel skims the waves with the rapidity and fearlessness of a sea-gull.

The south-eastern wall of the Archipelago is formed by the islands of Papua or New Guinea, forming an immense country of themselves, which has never been explored. On the map it extends through eighteen degrees of longitude, and between eight and nine of latitude; but the interior is quite unknown, and the probability seems to be that it forms rather a group of islands than a single island. It is separated from the Australian continent only by the Torres Strait; and its eastern coast is inhabited by the yellow-complexioned, long-haired races of the South Sea. The west is apparently the original country of the oriental negro; and for this reason, and in the uncertainty in which everything remains respecting New Guinea, geographers usually comprise only its great western peninsula within the circle of the Archipelago.

The negro race appears to have degenerated in the other islands, for Symes's description is inapplicable to the comparatively robust blacks of Papua. Their hair, besides, although still frizzled, or rather twisted in spiral tufts, is much longer; and in order to make the most of this distinction of beauty, they comb it straight out all round, and adorn it with feathers, so as to form a coiffure nearly a yard in depth. The Papuan, likewise, at least of the peninsula, is more civilized. He understands barter, which he carries on to some extent with the Chinese and Bugis; he ties a cloth round his middle and between his thighs, made of the fibres of the cocoa-nut; he clothes his females in a similar garment of blue Surat cloth; he wears bracelets of glass and China beads; he manufactures a kind of earthenware, and composes mats of the palm tree; and—a still surer token of civilization—he understands the art of war sufficiently to carry the battle to the doors of Gilolo, Ceram, and other islands, which he was formerly accustomed to do, and he still builds

his hut on posts below low-water mark, with a narrow gangway to the land and another to the sea, so as to be fortified against attack on both points, or ready, should occasion call, to take to the woods or the water at the approach of an enemy. His amphibious cabin boasts a mat or two, a fire-place, a pot of native earthenware, and some sago flour; and he has purchased iron tools, such as a hatchet and a knife, together with beads, plates, and basins from the Chinese, giving in exchange slaves, missay bark, ambergris, tortoise-shell, sea-slug, small pearls, birds of paradise and other similar preparations.

The Arabians were early acquainted with Papua, but it was first visited by Europeans in 1511; although the English appear to have had no knowledge of it till near the close of the last century. The country, so far as it is known, is hilly but not mountainous; it is covered with palm trees and large timber; and the more inland inhabitants exchange some kind of agricultural produce with those of the sea coast for coarse cutlery. The cocoa-nut, bread-fruit, plantain and pine-apple, are also known; but the qualities of the soil can only be surmised from the richness of the vegetation. At the north-eastern extremity there are various smaller islands, of which Wageeo is the most considerable. Here we already find the negro race driven into the interior, and Malays occupying the coasts. More to the southward is another Papuan island, Mysol, of nearly the same character.

Having thus followed the south-west, south, and south-east boundary, we shall now, in pursuing our survey, glance at the interior of the Archipelago before proceeding northward, where the Philippines form the long sharp apex of this great triangular figure.

The whole of the numerous islands between Celebes and Papua are geographically called the Moluccas,

although politically this name is restricted to the Dutch spice islands, Banda, Amboyna, Ceram, Batchian, Tydore, and Ternate. This distinction, however, is of little consequence to our present purpose, for the latter alone are of sufficient consequence to demand a description; although Gilolo, one of the others, is nearly as large as the whole of the spice islands together. Gilolo, it may be said in passing, is estimated at about two hundred and twenty miles in length, by thirty the average breadth; although its extraordinary shape, composed of four long and narrow limbs, diverging from a common centre, renders the calculation difficult. It abounds in buffaloes, deer, goats, and wild hogs, and has a few sheep; and it is said to be the farthest eastern point in this region where horned cattle or sheep are found. Little farther is known respecting its population, except by the Dutch themselves, but that the pulp of the sago tree, which it possesses in great abundance, forms the common food of the inhabitants.

The Banda cluster are the most southern of the spice islands, and are twelve in number, each only a few miles in extent. These are lofty volcanic isles, one of them constantly vomiting forth smoke or flame; and all possessing a rich black soil, luxuriantly clothed with trees, chiefly nutmegs. This tree resembles a large pear tree but with a laurel-shaped leaf. It does not begin to bear till the twelfth or fourteenth year, and then two out of three prove to be barren. It produces on an average ten pounds weight per annum, including the mace or membrane that envelopes the nutmeg, and dies about the twenty-fourth year.

The Dutch have taken great pains to extirpate these trees from all the other islands, and bribe the native princes from time to time to destroy them. The punish-

ment for illicit trading is either death or banishment, according to the rank of the criminal; but, notwithstanding this, it is supposed that seventy-five thousand pounds weight, including nutmegs and mace, are clandestinely exported in the year. The original inhabitants of Banda were turned out to make room for settlers called "park-keepers" from Holland; but these persons, who at present possess two thousand slaves, hold their farms on a very insecure footing. The produce of the Banda group is estimated by Crawford at six hundred thousand pounds weight of nutmegs, and one hundred and fifty thousand of mace. Before the Dutch monopoly, the fruit was exported in the shell, which is still supposed by the natives to be the most advisable plan.

Amboyna is about thirty-two miles long by ten in breadth, and its volcanic soil is so rich in the finer woods, that a Dutch botanist presented to a duke of Tuscany a cabinet inlaid with four hundred specimens, all of which he had obtained in the island. The most distinguished of these is the clove, about the size of the nutmeg tree, which begins to bear flowers at nine years of age, and then continues for a hundred years to yield from two to three pounds per annum. The spice is the cup of the unopened flower. The policy of the Dutch as to this production has been the same as with respect to nutmegs; they have extirpated the tree wherever they found it possible, except in Amboyna, with the view of realizing a large profit from a small trade, instead of multiplying a small profit by encouraging the consumption. The only strangers allowed to settle here are Chinese, the rest of the inhabitants being Dutch and natives, the latter including a few oriental negroes.

Ceram is about one hundred and eighty-five miles long by about thirty, and is traversed from east to west by a

mountain range, of which one of the peaks is seven thousand feet above the sea. It was formerly rich in cloves and nutmegs, but these were extirpated by the Dutch, and it is now chiefly distinguished by its natural forests of the sago tree. This is a tube of hard wood, about thirty feet high, without bark, and about twenty inches in diameter; yielding, when cut down between its twelfth and twentieth year, from three to four hundred pounds weight of pith, from which the sago flour is obtained. This pith is reduced to a powder like sawdust, and the meal baked into thin cakes of bread. For exportation, the sago meal is mixed with water, and the paste rubbed into small grains of the size and form of coriander seeds, and of a reddish hue. It is sent from the eastern islands to Singapore, where of late years a portion of it has been granulated anew, and bleached by the Chinese in such a manner as to give it a fine pearly lustre, and in this form it is now most esteemed in the markets of Europe.

Batchian is about fifty-two miles long by twenty, and is separated from Gilolo only by a narrow strait. Tydore and Ternate are two small isles, each dominated by a cloud-capped peak, from which numerous streams descend to the sea. This part of the Molucca cluster is supposed to have been the original garden of the finer spices, and to this day larger nutmegs are casually found in the woods of Ternate than any produced by cultivation in Banda.

Westward of the Moluccas is Celebes, an island resembling Gilolo in grotesqueness of form, about five hundred miles in length by one hundred and fifty in breadth. From the great length of the country in comparison with its inconsiderable breadth, nearly the whole population are near the sea, and their local position, aided by the

natural advantages of the coast and the magnitude and resources of the island, has rendered the tribes of Celebes the most distinguished mariners and merchants of the Archipelago. Their early contact with other races, occasioned by their determination to a seafaring life, has had the usual effect on the progress of civilization; and this remarkable island, accordingly, is not only in a state of comparative refinement itself, but has reacted in like manner upon the destinies of its wilder neighbours. In whatever corner of the region profitable business is to be transacted, the Bugis, and to a less extent the Macassars of Celebes, are to be found either as visitors or colonists. They are the general carriers of these seas, the agents through whom commercial intercourse is kept up even among islands whose inhabitants never leave the shore. They live at home under feudal institutions too burthensome to the body of the people to attach them indissolubly to their native soil, and thus they readily from wanderers become settlers. Their women are neither family drudges nor toys of the senses, but sisters, mistresses, and wives, who are not only the equals of the men in social life, but are eligible to become the political heads of the nation. They have a literature,—this central people of these remote islands,—and the Sinbads of the eastern seas relate their adventures in a soft euphonous language, or amuse their leisure with historical romances or tales of love and war. But let us not be guilty of the common absurdity of comparing the arts and letters of a remote people with those of Europe. It is sufficient that all the elements of civilization are obviously in progress of development among the Bugis, and that through them it is in the power of further advanced nations to act upon the whole region.

Some traditions remain among them, and are inter-

woven with their romantic fictions, of their ancient power and extensive dominion, extending on one side to the Bay of Bengal, and elsewhere, comprising the Sooloo Islands, the Philippines, and the Moluccas. These, however, should rather be considered calumnies upon their ancestors, since they have left no monuments of such greatness. The establishment of Mahomedanism is here, as in the other islands, the beginning of their history; although, from the name of some of their ancient deities, it may be conjectured that an early connection of some kind existed with Hindostan. The island is visited by Chinese junks every year, which carry home birds' nests and other dainties of the kind, tortoise-shell, agar wood, and hides; but the principal internal industry consists in the manufacture of imported cotton into Bugis cloth, which is in constant demand throughout the whole Archipelago. The teak tree grows to some extent, and gold is found in the beds of rivers and torrents.

Westward and north-westward of Celebes lies the great island of Borneo, estimated at seven hundred and fifty miles in length by three hundred and fifty the average breadth. Although long celebrated in Europe for its gold and diamonds, this country is imperfectly known, even on its sea coasts, and not at all in the interior. It is loosely said to have an alluvial and marshy soil, interspersed with small jungly hills, for thirty miles from the sea, then to heave into mountains, stretching in ranges from north to south, covered with dense forests, and intermingled with rivers and lakes. This, however, is in great part matter of conjecture, and a late writer doubts the existence of mountain ranges at all. It is farther said, that the central districts are at least partially inhabited, and supply the sea coasts with articles of food or traffic; but nothing more can be asserted, even with probability,

than that the unexplored depths of the island are peopled by the monkey tribe in unexampled abundance and variety, from the most grotesque baboon in nature up to the orang-outang, which latter probably meets in the same recesses, without any prodigious feeling of inferiority, the lowest member of the human family in the degenerate black of the oriental islands. The orang-outang, however, although known, is not common in the more accessible parts of the country, but Mr. Earl saw a young one a few years ago, which, at some yards distance, could hardly be distinguished from a negro child.

That there can be more inhabitants in the interior than some wandering negroes, who have fled as usual before the brown race, is improbable, from the variety of foreign tribes which occupy the coasts. Borneo, in fact, appears to have been long a general resort for refugees or emigrants from the surrounding countries, whose settlements could hardly have taken place without leaving traditions of conflicts with the natives, had there been any population to oppose them. On the east and south coasts are the Bugis from Celebes; on the west the Malays and Chinese; on the north-west the half-caste descendants of the Moors of Western India; on the north the Cochin Chinese; and on the north-east the Sooloos. In addition to these are several distinct tribes of Men of the Sea, who live on the water, and rarely quit their prows to tempt the unaccustomed dangers of the shore. Of the brown race, the Dyaks, who are met with near the coast, appear to have some claim to be considered aborigines; but they themselves assert their descent from the Chinese, while, on the other hand, it is said, that they bear an absolutely perfect resemblance to the American tribes on the banks of the great rivers of Guiana. The Dutch are as yet the only European specimens; and, unhappily, it is

the custom of that people to shroud their colonial settlements in mystery and concealment.

The Bugis, on the east coast, have not lost their commercial character. They carry the produce of Borneo to Singapore, and bring back in exchange the manufactures of Europe and India, with which they supply the eastern parts of the Archipelago. They find no difficulty in keeping the Dyaks of their neighbourhood in order; for the circumstance of their being the sole purveyors of salt, gives them much power and dignity in the eyes of a people who look upon that condiment as the first luxury of life.

The whole of the south coast is claimed by the Dutch, but their only settlement is at Bunjar Massin, where they had formerly a factory from 1747 to 1809, which in the latter year they abandoned as unproductive. In 1811, the British established a factory at the invitation of the native chief; but this was handed over to the former nation at the restoration of Java. Between this place and the south-west point there are several independent Bugis towns, which carry on a brisk trade with Singapore.

The west coast was ceded to the Dutch by the king of Bantam about 1780; but the Malay and Chinese settlers, by whom it was occupied, not understanding very well the right of a petty Javanese prince to exercise such generosity, made so strenuous an opposition, that after a trial of fourteen years the Dutch abandoned their settlements. In 1823 they again planted a colony in Pontianak, purchasing the diamond mines from the sultan for fifty thousand dollars. The speculation proved unfortunate, and they sent a body of troops without ceremony to take possession of the Chinese mines; but that quiet people waxing valiant in defence of their pro-

perty succeeded in driving them away. This was the commencement of a struggle between two of the most commercial, industrious, plodding, and persevering nations in the world, and of a nature perhaps unexampled in history. The Dutch founded another settlement at Sambas, a considerable distance to the north, and purchased from the sultan a monopoly of the duties; thus placing the Chinese between two fires, while they blockaded the intermediate coast with their gun-boats. The Chinese bore the deprivation of foreign trade like stoics for several years, and then capitulated, by consenting to traffick only through the medium of the Dutch ports—but not till they had accustomed themselves to do without foreign commodities at all. To this day they live with the most niggard economy, hoarding every thing they can save for a fund wherewith to return to their own country, abstaining from the production of any article, except for their own use, adapted for the Chinese market, and allowing even the surplus rice crop to rot on the ground. The Dutch console themselves by levying a capitation tax upon the Chinese, and an impost on each individual of the nation as he arrives or departs from the country. They have likewise the monopoly of salt and opium in their own hands, and levy duties on all other goods so stringently that they have contrived to annihilate a trade which existed with Cochin China and Western Asia, to reduce the annual number of Chinese junks visiting their coasts from fifteen to four, and to put an almost entire stop to the immigration of that people who formerly flocked to the island to the number of three thousand in the year.

The town of Sambas, we are told by Mr. Earl, presents a mean appearance; even the houses occupied by the government officers being thatched wooden buildings

of one story. The huts of the Malays are raised on posts on the banks of the river, and some on floats in the water, and have no communication with each other except by canoes. The Chinese town of Sinkawan he describes as a single street of low wooden houses, the front rooms of which are shops for the sale of grain, meat, groceries, &c., or rooms appropriated to opium smoking. Montradok, their capital, where are the principal gold mines, consists in like manner of a single street three quarters of a mile long; but the country between the two is described in some parts as "teeming with population, and covered with villages and cottages," the farm-houses built of unburnt bricks, covered with thatch, and surrounded by fruit-trees, bearing a striking resemblance to those which adorn an English landscape. Houses for the entertainment of travellers are found at intervals along the road; in one of which the same writer was received by an obliging Chinese landlady. "Displaying no idle curiosity," says he, "our kind hostess immediately commenced the preparations for our entertainment, bustling about, and scolding her two handmaidens—who, in a few minutes, perhaps in consequence of the admonishment, placed a duck on the fire to grill; a dish containing a preparation of rice, much resembling maccaroni, being put before me to employ my time until the duck should be ready for the table." This scene occurs in the eastern hemisphere one degree from the meridian; and such are the colonists whom Batavian policy is fast chasing away from one of the largest, richest, and, proportionably, most thinly inhabited islands on the globe!

Pursuing our course northward along this coast, we find the Dyak town of Serawak, situated in a bay, with lofty hills in the rear; and the sudden rise of this place a

few years ago is as fraught with encouragement as some of the other events we have related are with warning. A lump of metal ore was picked up here accidentally by the crew of some vessel which had put in for water—for the greater part of the coast was and is entirely unknown. It was discovered to be antimony; and being informed that the article would meet with sale at Singapore, the rajah of Borneo on one side, and the Malay chiefs of Sambas on the other, rushed with avidity into the trade; the "wild" Dyaks gathered and bustled like bees about the spot; and presently the British emporium received annual shipments of antimony to the extent of fourteen hundred tons. England is now supplied with this semi-metal exclusively from Borneo through the medium of Singapore. It has been hitherto used only in medicine and in the composition of types; but the Malays themselves employ it as a brilliant dye.

From Point Datu, two degrees beyond Serawak to Borneo Proper, the north-west coast, for a distance of three hundred miles, is occupied by Dyak tribes more independent and more warlike than the others; and some of the harbours are rendezvous for the Lanun pirates from Mindanao, who cruise to the very doors of Singapore, and, besides plundering the native traders, sometimes carry off into slavery the entire population of a small town or village. Their women, in the mean time, remain on the coast of Borneo, to take care of the treasure already collected, and, when necessary, to fight the Dyaks without male assistance.

Borneo Proper was formerly a place of some considerable trade—the greatest, we believe, on the island; but it has been nearly destroyed by piracy and internal dissensions. The intercourse with China was especially important; and large junks were built with the fine tim-

ber which abounds on the banks of the river near the town. In 1825 a friendly diplomatic mission from the rajah arrived at Singapore, in a prow of his own of upwards of two hundred tons burthen. The ambassador was attended by a suite of between two and three hundred persons, and landed with great splendour, at a moment when there were no fewer than sixteen Bornean trading vessels in the harbour.

Many Chinese settlers still remain, who are chiefly employed in the cultivation of pepper; and within the few last years a new trade with Singapore has arisen, in which that article and camphor, gold dust, and diamonds are exchanged for British goods. The domain of the rajah extends only forty miles to the north; but he claims the whole coast to the south for several hundred miles. His actual control, however, is said to embrace at present only his own town and neighbourhood, and the Dyak town of Serawak.

The town of Borneo is built ten miles up a river of the same name, which discharges itself into a fine bay, with a group of islands in front. It is a kind of Indian Venice, traversed by water streets, through which the inhabitants glide in canoes instead of gondolas, managed chiefly by women. Among the islands is Laboan, where an English factory retired in 1775, when expelled from Balambangan, and where British commerce will once more be protected by the British flag.

The remainder of Borneo, the north-east corner, is the only part of the island where the English ever made any attempt to obtain a territorial footing. It was formally ceded to them by the Sooloos in 1774, and the East India Company actually took possession by establishing a factory on Balambangan, an island near the coast. In the following year, however, they were driven off, not by the

Sooloo government, but by a body of labourers employed in constructing buildings, and retired, as has been stated, to Laboan in the bay of Borneo Proper. The territory abandoned from so inadequate a cause is stated to be superior in soil and climate, and equal in mineral productions, to the finest parts of the country. It has every variety of wood and water, mountain and plain; and from its geographical situation is calculated to become a great centre of commerce between the east and the west. It has been ascertained, moreover, that even the settlement of Laboan will give the British the command of treasures far more valuable than the gold and diamonds with which the country abounds. It will give their steamers *coal*, and thus furnish them with new wings of vapour to continue their triumphant flight from one end of the world to the other.

In addition to the old Chinese colonists, a good many Cochin Chinese have of late years settled on this part of Borneo, particularly towards the north-eastern point, and promise to become a valuable class of the inhabitants. The natural productions, however, are sufficient to attract the best colonists in the world. They include gold and diamonds, which may be collected with little trouble, and tin, found at present on the surface of the earth, but buried no doubt in larger deposits in its bosom. The forests yield immense trees fit for shipbuilding, but more especially for masts and spars; and the plains are covered with herds of large cattle which yield their milk to the Dyaks, but are not turned to any other account.

To the eastward of the north-eastern corner of Borneo is the group of the small Sooloo isles, which are remarkable for the piratical habits of the people being conjoined with a certain refinement not known among their better disposed neighbours. The Sooloos have been

described as the Algerines of the Archipelago, and merit the character. They are a restless and adventurous people, who take with equal zeal to trade or piracy; their principal island is populous and well cultivated; and being beyond the violence of the monsoons it enjoys a perpetual summer. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when the commerce of the Archipelago was at its height, this was a grand depôt between the Philippines and Japan on one hand, and the southern islands and even Ceylon and the Coromandel coast on the other. The loss of commerce in the general degradation of this region since the advent of the Europeans, appears to have converted the merchants of Sooloo into pirates, while leaving them many of the tastes of civilization. They are fond of music and dancing; and they dress gaily, the men in white waistcoats and breeches, and the ladies with petticoats over all. The Sooloos are usually at war with their brother pirates of Mindanao; but it is difficult to tell whether they have more war or peace with the Spanish islands, as their cruising prows, when sallying forth openly to herry them, leave the traders of the latter quietly trafficking in the Sooloo harbours.

Mindanao, otherwise Magindanao, the most southerly of the Philippines, lies to the north-east of the Sooloo group, and is a considerable island about three hundred miles long by one hundred and five in breadth. The interior is traversed by ranges of mountains, with lakes between, one of the latter being fifteen miles across. From this a single river is discharged, the only stream, not an intermittent torrent, which is known to reach the sea. The mountains are in general volcanic, but only one discharges eruptions; and when this has ceased for some time the natives in the vicinity sacrifice a slave to

propitiate the god who thus fails to manifest his presence. In some places the island is one vast forest of valuable timber trees, and in others an impervious jungle. The well-watered soil is fertile to extravagance, producing besides abundance of rice all the tropical fruits and vegetables. Deer and wild cattle roam in immense herds over the plains, for there is no ravenous animal on the island—but man.

The Mindanaoans are rival pirates of the Sooloos, but are somewhat less refined than the latter. The form of their cruisers shows the desperate nature of the trade and of the men; some of them being fifty feet long and only three broad. The oars are numerous, and are rowed with prodigious velocity; and sometimes, when endangered by the press of sail, the crew jump overboard and hang on by the outrigger for hours to ease their vessel. Their hand is against the whole Archipelago alike, but the Spanish islands, from their near neighbourhood, are the field they visit most frequently for slaves and plunder. At other times they repair to the coasts of Celebes, and go round to Java and Sumatra; and on one occasion a fleet of these corsairs sailed into the Straits, and attacked the British settlement of Pinang, but were beaten off. The Spaniards still retain a precarious hold of some settlements on the northern coast; but the great bulk of the inhabitants are Mahomedans, with some tribes of oriental negroes in the interior. The exports of the island are gold, rice, wax, cassia, rattans, and pepper; and the imports, cotton cloth, coarse cutlery, opium, and various articles adapted to a rude people.

Mindanao is the eastern base of the Philippines, and Palawan the western. This is an island two hundred and seventy-five miles long by thirty-two, which was formerly subject to the Sooloos, but is extremely little

known. It is said to possess gold mines and hot springs; but whatever natural resources it may have will now in all probability be drawn forth, as the industrious and ingenious Cochin-Chinese have of late years begun to colonize its coasts. The rest of the Philippines are usually known as the Spanish islands, but some are only partially colonized by that people, and others, like Mindanao, are entirely independent; while none are at present of much commercial importance but Luzon, the most northerly with the exception of the small Babuyan islands.

Luzon is a large and irregularly-shaped island, estimated at four hundred miles in length, by an average breadth of one hundred and fifteen. In the interior it is a wild and mountainous country, exhibiting in its conformation the agency of subterranean fire, from which it still suffers in earthquakes and the eruptions of volcanos. In the recesses of these mountains, the oriental negroes, in their most degenerate state, are sometimes caught like wild beasts, and are described as "woolly-headed pigmies," roosting like birds upon the trees of the forest. Of the other tribes, who possessed the country before the arrival of the Spaniards, some are more or less civilized, and some are nominally Christians; but others still defy the power of the Europeans among the fastnesses of their native soil. In general, however, the character of the inhabitants is softness and timidity, and it is in this principal island of Spain that the capture of slaves is found easiest and safest by the pirates of the Archipelago. Some travellers are of a different opinion, and La Perouse describes the natives as being in no respect inferior to Europeans, but the well-known fact we have mentioned tells against his testimony.

Manilla, the capital, stands in an angle of a bay, where the sides sloping down to the sea, although almost untouched by the hand of man, present an appearance of the richest cultivation. Even the mountains beyond are covered with verdure to the summits. The city is surrounded by a moat and towers, and may contain a population of one hundred thousand, including four or five thousand Europeans. The Spaniards are far more merciful in their colonial policy than either the Portuguese or the Dutch, but till recently they have been still more severe in their commercial restrictions than the latter people. They would permit no foreign nation to share in the treasures of the Philippines, and confined the trade to a single galleon in the year, voyaging between Manilla, Mexico, and South America. For this reason a port situated so favourably for trade, both with the New World and the Old, has as yet attained to comparatively little distinction; but the events of the late European war have destroyed this absurd system, and the ships of all nations are now admitted into the ports of the Philippines. The principal articles of export are sugar, hemp, indigo, cigars, cotton, coffee, rice, saffron-wood, mother of pearl, hides, ebony, and gold dust; and the imports, cloths, iron, hardware, furniture, fire-arms, and ammunition.

CHAPTER V.

GENERAL VIEW OF THE PRODUCTIONS, COMMERCE AND MANNERS OF THE ARCHIPELAGO—THE COASTS OF CAMBODIA AND COCHIN CHINA.

In passing thus lightly through the Archipelago, we have mentioned incidentally some of its more remarkable productions, and occasionally indicated the kind of traffick in which the natives are employed; but it will perhaps be considered of some utility if we now bestow a general glance upon the resources and trade of the islands, and upon the character and prospects of their inhabitants.

"The agriculture of the Indian islands," says Crawford, "is unquestionably more rich and various than that of any other portion of the globe;" and he adds, what must have already suggested itself to the reader, that some of its most remarkable productions are found nowhere else, and that in all probability no other country is capable of producing them. The climate here, as in other intertropical regions, is divided into two seasons,

the wet and the dry; the one the period of germination, the other that of fructification,—in fact (for the laws of nature are only modified, not changed, in different latitudes), the spring and autumn of Europe. But as the sun has always sufficient power to influence vegetation, and as some showers fall at all seasons, there are plants that grow indiscriminately throughout the year; and in those places where there are alternate mountains and plains, the one to attract the fertilizing moisture, and the other to receive and retain it, two distinct crops are frequently raised in one year. The soil, it needs hardly be said, has an equal share of responsibility. Wherever the geological formation is secondary trap-rock, the land is fertile in vegetation; while the granitic and other primary formations indicate a meagre flora, but wealth in the mineral kingdom. In Java, for instance, where metals are almost unknown, and precious stones wholly so, the soil is the richest in the world, the mould being ten or twelve feet deep in the plains at the foot of the mountains—and not unfrequently, it is said, *fifty* feet deep.

Rice, wherever the soil is capable of producing it, is the grand staple. Sometimes a wild crop is snatched from the forest lands, prepared by merely burning the trees and rank grass; in other places this eastern bread-corn depends upon the sun and casual showers; in others it is flooded by the periodical rains; and in others still it is subjected at will to artificial irrigation. The two last are wet crops, and yield six times more than the dry. The fields on which they grow are usually small areas closely diked round, so as to form a marsh, if not a pond, during the floods; but the slopes of the mountains, likewise profusely irrigated by the streams and rills being dammed up as they descend, are laid out in terrace above terrace, covered with the golden harvest, which far excels

in beauty and richness all other cereal crops. In Java, under favourable circumstances, an English acre was found to produce six hundred and forty-one pounds avoirdupoise of clean grain besides a green crop.

Among these islands, maize is the next grain in importance to rice, and is supposed to have been cultivated there before the discovery of America. It grows anywhere, and under almost any circumstances; but is reckoned by the natives an inferior food, answering to the barley or oats of Europe. It yields on an average about one hundred fold; but in the rare cases where good lands are assigued to it, this has been known to increase to four or five hundred fold.

Sago, although the pith of a tree, is the bread of the islanders. The trunk is used as timber for various purposes; the leaf for thatch; the bran, or refuse of the pith, for feeding hogs; and when thrown into heaps it generates both an animal and a vegetable delicacy—an exquisite mushroom, and a worm palatable even to European taste.

Various kinds of pulse are grown as green crops, in succession to marsh rice; one being chiefly used by the Chinese in the manufacture of soy.

The yam, which appears to be indigenous here as well as in America, sometimes grows to the weight of forty or fifty pounds, but is little esteemed as food where grain of any kind can be had. The sweet potato is sometimes found of equal size, although the usual weight is only a few pounds; and the common American potato grows indiscriminately at all seasons of the year, but at an elevation not less than four thousand feet above the sea. In the same high lands, wheat and almost all the European vegetables are raised with ease. The capsicum is a universal condiment, and next to salt itself as a neces-

sary. It grows on every soil, and is consumed in immense quantities by the natives, who, strangely enough, regard with indifference the finer spices for which their country is famous.

Oil is in much requisition as an article of food; and it is chiefly obtained from the cocoa-nut, the ground pistachio, the sessamum, and the kanari. The last is a tall, handsome tree, bearing a fruit like the walnut; which is either eaten as a delicacy, or made into cakes with the addition of sago meal, or yields an excellent culinary oil.

The areca is a graceful palm from thirty to forty feet high, producing fruit in six years, and perishing in twenty-five. Hardly any culture is required, and it grows on any soil; but is most frequently found in ornamental plantations close to the villages. The fruit in its ripe state, when it becomes an object of commerce, resembles a nutmeg covered with a spongy fibrous exterior, and is chewed with the gambir, the pungent and aromatic leaf of the betel-pepper, and other ingredients.

Another palm, the wild and rude-looking gomuti, produces fruit in such abundance, that the quantity depending from a single shoot is more than a load for a man. From this tree the islanders obtain toddy at the rate of three quarts a day for two years, which is either boiled into sugar, or suffered to undergo the vinous fermentation, when it becomes an intoxicating drink. In both forms it is extensively consumed by the natives. But the gomuti yields a substance of still more value, resembling black horse hair, found in a matted form round the insertions of the branches. It is manufactured into cordage of all kinds, up to the cables and standing rigging of a large ship, and is far superior for such purposes to the fibre of the cocoa-nut. But this is not all; hard twigs found in the matted mass are used as pens, and as arrows

projected from blowpipes; a soft substance which grows under the hair answers the purpose of oakum, and is extensively used in China for tinder; and the pith supplies a farina resembling sago. Each tree yields eight pounds of oakum or tinder, and eighteen pounds of the cordage material.

The natives cultivate their own tobacco, which they use in great quantities; and so astonishingly fertile are some portions of Java, that a plant which everywhere else in the world requires manure and elaborate dressing, grows there, alternately with rice, with no other care than that of irrigation. The banana or plantain, the breadfruit, and a host of other less useful but more delicious fruits, are found throughout the whole region.

Cotton is widely diffused throughout the Archipelago, and almost in every island of a different character; but in general the remarkable number of its seeds impedes the cleaning and deteriorates the value of the article. Of the numerous plants that yield a stronger filament, the rami, a kind of nettle, is the most extensively cultivated, and its fibre is in general use for nets and other cordage. But the rattan answers the ordinary purposes of ligature in the islands, and is exported to China, Bengal, and Europe in great quantities. It is a prickly bush sending forth long, slender shoots of a bright yellow colour, and grows wild in all the forests, but more especially in those of Borneo, Sumatra, and Celebes. Hemp, as in India, is reared only for its narcotic juice. There is also a plant from which paper is manufactured, but of a coarse quality and dingy appearance. Before its use was discovered the natives wrote on the leaves of the lontar, a palm which yields likewise an intoxicating sap.

The nibung, a tall, slender, and perfectly straight palm,

is used for posts in architecture, and when the pith is removed, for water pipes; while the germ of the foliage at the summit has in some parts the taste of a delicate cabbage, in others that of a more delicate filbert. Of the greater trees, the teak, which like its rival the oak, takes nearly a century to come to maturity, rises frequently to the height of eighty feet, with a diameter of six or eight feet. Mr. Crawford states, that, as compared with the oak, it is equally strong and more buoyant, that its durability is more uniform and decided, that it is fit to endure all climates and alternations of climate, and that, without danger of either dry or wet rot, it may be used in the timber yard at once on being taken almost green from the forest. The lingoa is used in the more eastern islands both for naval and other architecture, and, like the other vegetable productions of the land of spices, is highly perfumed, so as to be used as a substitute for sandal. From the beauty of the wood, it is admirably well qualified for cabinet-work; but its immense excrescences, called kayubaka, afford materials resembling the finest variegated marble. The woods adapted for this purpose, however, are too numerous for specification; as are likewise those that produce the gums or resins used for smearing the bottoms of ships and other purposes. This substance exudes spontaneously from the bark, and is found in masses under the trees; or, when these are situated near the shores, it is carried away by the tide and collected in distant places as drift.

Some of the gums afford materials for torches, and others when inspissated are a true caoutchouc; but the vegetable tallow yielded by the bassia in the more western islands must become of great importance in a more advanced state of the arts. Under the soft bark of the tree is found the nut from which this concrete oil is

obtained. Another nut, of a shrub called the rarak, is remarkable for its detergent qualities, and is used by the natives in lieu of soap.

Indigo grows wild in the Archipelago, and is supposed to be indigenous. The native process of manufacture is merely to macerate the stalks and leaves of the plant for some days; then to boil them, and then to add some quick lime and fern leaves to fix the colour. During the British occupation of Java, however, the Anglo-Indian method was taught, and Batavia will probably one day rival Calcutta in this staple. At present the exports from Java are about a million pounds, and from Manilla about a quarter of a million. There are likewise numerous plants that produce a yellow die; but turmeric is used here less as a dye than as a condiment. The best of the several red dyes is obtained from the sapan tree; but this has been superseded in Europe by the Brazil wood, the product of which is both brighter and more abundant. The medicinal plants, with the exception of the cubeb, a native of Java, are but little known in Europe. Those of a poisonous nature are numerous; and one, a tall and umbrageous denizen of the forest, was converted by a French imagination into that "all-blasting tree" which has exercised so notable an enchantment over the poets ever since, from Darwin downwards. Upas is the generic name for poison in this region.

Besides indigo and other articles of less consequence named in the foregoing list, and the spices, &c., incidentally adverted to in the last chapter, there are various productions of the islands which are more especially objects of exportation to foreign countries. The sugar cane is indigenous in this region, and in Java and the Philippines is used in the manufacture to an extent which is increasing every day. The famous Batavian arrack is

distilled by the Chinese chiefly from the molasses, but with the addition of rice and a small quantity of palm wine. Coffee is almost confined to Java, but there the plantations in the flowering season look as if they were loaded with a heavy fall of snow. Two gigantic myrtles, the larger growing on the mountains, and the smaller on the sea coast, afford a material used for caulking vessels, and the essential oil, called in Europe cajeput. The former article is made from the bark, and the latter distilled from the leaves. Cassia, cardamums, ginger, and a variety of other similar productions are common; but the Malayan camphor is peculiar to the Indian islands, and even there its geographical limits are very confined. This essential oil, whether in a concrete or fluid form, is found in the fissures of the wood of a large forest tree, and is not used by the natives, but exported to China, where it is highly valued. The camphor that comes to Europe is obtained from a small laurel in China and Japan, but the Chinese monopolize for their own use the production of the Archipelago, which bears a commercial value a hundred times greater than that of the others.

Benzoin, the frankincense of the Indian islands, is as fastidious in climate as camphor, and is vastly more valuable as an article of commerce than the Arabian gum. It is used in religious ceremonies by the Catholics, Mahomedans, Hindoos, and Chinese, in fumigating the houses of the great, and by the Japanese chiefs in smoking with tobacco. Sandal-wood, which is found in greatest perfection in Timor, is chiefly exported to China, where it is not only used as a perfume, but manufactured into frames and small pieces of furniture. Dragon's blood is exported to India and Europe, as well as to China; and the incense derived from aloes wood, or rather from what is supposed to be a diseased portion of

the tree, is much in request in all the countries of the east.

The animal kingdom in the Archipelago exhibits proportionally as great a variety as the vegetation: but we shall here restrict ourselves to a very brief mention of the articles for which commerce is indebted to it. Hides and horns are staple articles of exportation to China, the large size of the buffaloes and oxen of the island rendering them of great value. It is said, however, by Crawford, that in Java, where this trade might be carried to a greater extent than elsewhere, the "number of hides available for exportation is diminished by the singular practice among the inhabitants of using the fresh hide as an article of food, nay, even esteeming it a dainty beyond any other part of the animal!" Ivory is an export of considerable importance from the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra.

Besides the bird of paradise, mentioned in another place, there are various other denizens of the air whose plumage is much sought after; but the most remarkable article of commerce furnished by the feathered creation is manufactured, so to speak, by a species of swallow, which builds in rocky caves at a distance from the habitations of man. The extravagances of the Roman epicures are imitated on a small scale in Covent Garden Market at the beginning of the season, when unripe vegetables, on account of their scarcity, fetch fifty times the price that is paid for them when they become more fit for consumption; but the passion of the Chinese for *birds' nests* appears to be a mania which has no reference to the common caprices of taste or ostentation. These luxuries resemble, we are told "a fibrous, ill-concocted isinglass," and "their most valuable quality is their being perfectly harmless." Various other birds build their nests partly

of the same materials, but mixed with hair, straw, feathers, &c., while the swallow in question works in isinglass alone, and his manufacture bears a money value in proportion to its purity. The nests are collected twice a year, and without undergoing any other process than drying, are sold to the Chinese traders for an annual sum not much less than three hundred thousand pounds.

The produce of the lac insect is chiefly confined to home consumption; but bees' wax is a valuable and considerable article of foreign commerce.

Fish, dried in the sun, is likewise a staple article of internal trade; but fish maws, sharks' fins, and tripang, likewise called sea-slug and biche de mer, are exported to China in great quantities. Tripang is an "unseemly looking substance, of a dirty brown colour, hard, rigid, scarcely possessing any power of locomotion nor appearance of animation;" and of this seductive article upwards of eight thousand hundred-weights are sold to the Chinese at Macassar alone. The tortoise fishery is usually combined with that of the tripang, and the shell is valuable in commerce; but pearls and the mother-of-pearl oyster are found chiefly among the Sooloo islands. Of all the inhabitants of these seas, however, the one that might be made the most valuable in commerce, if the paltry monopoly of the Dutch was abolished, is the spermaceti whale which abounds in the latitude of the spice islands, and in that portion of the Pacific which lies between the Archipelago and New Holland.

The mineral wealth of the Archipelago is not less remarkable. It is the richest country in the world in tin, and in gold is supposed to be not inferior to America. Copper and iron are likewise found in various situations; but as yet silver, lead, and zinc have not made their appearance. We have already

alluded to the extraordinary richness of Banca in tin. The miners are exclusively Chinese; and, owing to the great abundance of the metal and the shallowness of the deposits, the expense of working is very trifling. The discovery of the treasure was made by accident so late as 1700, previous to which time the islands had been supplied chiefly from the west coast of the Malay peninsula. The produce of Banca is principally grain tin, which is superior to the block-tin of Cornwall by 22 per centum. The latter, besides, is obtained by working through solid granite to a depth sometimes of many hundred fathoms, while the former lies beneath a few soft strata of sand or clay extending only three or four fathoms. The process of clearing the mine of water, and separating the ore from its material, presents a corresponding difference in the two countries, and the result of the whole comparison, according to Crawford, is, that Banca tin is produced for 22*s.* 8*d.* per hundred weight, while Cornish tin costs 64*s.* 7*d.* "Were the Cornish workmen," says he, "with their ingenuity, their capital, and machinery, to be employed on such mines as those of Banca, no other mines in the world would in a short time be worth working." Before 1814 Great Britain had a virtual monopoly of this article; but since then Banca has stepped in to supply China (to which she was accustomed to send one thousand tons annually,) and has even met her in the markets of Europe. The British tin trade, notwithstanding, has increased rather than diminished, while that of the Archipelago has reached the annual value of two hundred and forty thousand pounds.

Gold is the metal next to tin in commercial value in the Archipelago, and is found in most of the larger islands, but more especially in Borneo and Sumatra.

The greater portion is obtained by washing the mud and sand of rivers, and the deposits of alluvial lands ; and the Chinese have applied themselves with much vigour to a rude mining process, as applied to the latter. It is true the process is not less simple and inefficient than that which has long been followed by the Malays of Sumatra, or the tin-miners of Banca ; but such is the abundance of the metal that the produce of the Archipelago is estimated to be nearly one-eighth part of that of the whole world. The emigrant Malays, when they possessed themselves of the western sea-coast of Borneo, appear to have applied themselves more to piracy than internal industry ; but from the moment the Chinese became settlers, that ingenious and plodding people began to dig their rude mines in the province of Montredok, and have thence spread over a great part of the coast. The gold is found in small veins, in a stiff soil, and from eight to fifteen feet below the surface, and is reached, according to the depth, either by a shaft being sunk, or the whole of the upper stratum removed. The ore, when dug up, is thrown into a wooden trough, into which a strong current of water from a neighbouring dam is turned, and the gold thus roughly separated, is afterwards washed by hand in small bowls. The metal obtained by this simple process is for the most part in small particles as fine as sand, and is to a trifling extent used as a currency by the Malay chiefs, beaten into pieces of the size of a sixpence ; but the great bulk of the gold dust destined for commerce is put up into small paper packets, weighing a tael, or two Spanish dollars. The gold in this magnificent island may be said to be inexhaustible. It is found in alluvial deposits which are distributed almost everywhere near the sea, and such being the case, it may be predicated as a fact that the primitive

mountains of the interior are rich in veins of this metal.

The diamond is found in considerable abundance in Borneo, but in no other part of the Archipelago. The territorial limits assigned to it by Crawford, the southern and western coasts, are probably erroneous, as it has likewise been found subsequently, as well as gold and tin, at the north-east end of the island, and at some distance in the interior north-east of the town of Montredok. It is chiefly sought after by the Dyaks and other natives, who attach more value to the stone as an ornament than the Chinese; but as a shaft requires to be sunk through several strata, it may be supposed that in such rude hands the mines receive but little justice. The diamonds of Borneo are usually small, but of fine water, though this is not indispensable to the value of the article in commerce. Bad diamonds, when broken into powder, are extensively used in the arts; and in this state, remarks Mr. Mawe, "they may be said to have a more extensive sale than brilliants with all their captivating beauty."

Such are the principal articles of necessity and luxury produced in the Archipelago, and which serve as the materials both of internal and external commerce. The traffic of the islands with each other consists not merely in the interchange of commodities for mutual use, but in the purchase and sale of articles intended for foreign markets; and in this latter trade the Javanese, Malays, and Bugis are the general carriers of the region. It was they who formed the first link in that mysterious chain of transmission which brought the spices of the further east to the gates of Rome; and when the avarice and tyranny of the nations of Europe robbed them of this business, it at least left them new channels of adventure.

The Bugis are at present the most eminent navigators of these seas; and some idea may be formed of the extent of their transactions (begun in this instance by advances of Chinese capital) from the fact that their tripang fishery, on the coast of New Holland, employs upwards of forty vessels of from twenty to fifty tons, and exports from Celebes to China eight thousand hundred-weights in the year.

The most ancient foreign commerce of the islands was in all probability with the Chinese; but it is only since the advent of the Europeans that this industrious people have made their appearance as colonists. The articles of importation are, black tea, coarse porcelain, iron culinary vessels, cotton cloths, raw silk, brass ware, paper, books, paints, shoes, fans, umbrellas, and toys; and the whole trade, principally carried on with Manilla and Batavia, was stated to employ thirty thousand tons of shipping before the rise of Singapore into importance.

The trade with the Talingas of south-western India is likewise of some antiquity, but has probably fallen off as the influence of the Anglo-Indians has extended. It introduces into the Archipelago, besides minor articles, tobacco, blue cotton cloths, and cotton chintzes. That with the Arabs of the Red Sea, and of Mocha, Jeddah, and Aden, was greatly injured by the discovery of the route to India by the Cape; but both this and the Malabar intercourse gave a new class of settlers to the Indian islands, the former exhibiting much energy and enterprise. The few Arab vessels that are still left in the trade make a considerable part of their freight by Mahomedan passengers, who perform the pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina and return in a few years in the odour of sanctity to their native islands. The intercourse of the islands with Bengal and the Coromandel coast

direct is carried on by vessels called Malay traders of from two to three hundred tons burthen, and consists chiefly in the interchange of opium and cotton goods for gold, tin, and pepper. With America there is no interchange worth mention, because that great country produces little that can be of any advantage to the Indian islanders; although the trade, notwithstanding, considerable in itself and daily increasing, teaches a "great moral lesson" which it is wonderful to think should be lost even upon Holland. In the year 1784, the Anglo-American flag was seen for the first time in the ports of India, and ever since, steering clear of the delusions that have governed the old world, it has pursued a tranquil and triumphant career. Without a foot of territory, without lending themselves to a single cabal among the natives, the motto of the republicans is "conciliation;" and this has proved to these wandering traders a talisman of success—not the less peaceable or honourable for its being guaranteed by the proud stripes of the Union waving from a Yankee frigate in the distance.

Within the Archipelago, the sales in 1841 of the Dutch East India Company of the produce of Java appears by the official return to have embraced fifty-five million kilogrammes of coffee, fifty million kilogrammes of sugar, and eight hundred and forty-six thousand, two hundred and ninety kilogrammes of indigo. "When it is remembered," say the Dutch journals, "that only eight years' labour have produced such a marvellous increase in the production of these possessions, since in 1833 the sales made by the Company did not reach six million six hundred or seven million kilogrammes of sugar, and twelve million kilogrammes of coffee, with little knowledge of indigo, it must be evident what an invaluable source of revenue they are to Holland."

It now only remains for us, on this subject, to notice the intercourse of the islands with Singapore, that great free entrepôt of the Archipelago, which, in the short space of twenty years, has gathered into its harbours a trade amounting to *five millions sterling*. It would be impossible to render such details interesting to Europeans, to whom four-fifths even of the names of places would be both new and strange; and we have therefore compressed from a well-informed local journal,* the following statement of the position of this Anglo-Indian-Chinese-Malay-Bugis city,—leaving out all insignificant ports, and other details not absolutely necessary in the general picture it is the object of our humble labours to draw.

The imports into Singapore from Borneo in 1842-43 consisted of antimony ore, 7,478 piculs; gold, &c. The exports for the same year amounted to 296,637 dollars, showing a decrease of 22,311 dollars. The most important were British cotton goods, 8,908 corges and 15 dozen; opium, 227 chests; tea, 1,928 boxes and 52 piculs; and specie equal to 34,202 dollars.

During this period eighty-eight boats, equal to 2,701 tons, arrived from Borneo.

The ports in Borneo, with which trade is principally carried on, are Brunai, or Borneo Proper, Banjermassin, Pontianak, Sambas, Coti, Passier, Peggotan, and Sarawak. The products commonly brought to Singapore are rattans, birds' nests, bees' wax, tortoise-shell, gold-dust and diamonds, tripang, pearl and raw sago, camphor, rice and paddy, mother-of-pearl-shells, garro and lakha woods, paper, sea-weed, mats, ebony, and antimony ore. The boats which come from the southern and eastern ports are commonly manned by Bugis, the principal carriers in the Archipelago, and, next to the

* Singapore Free Press.

Chinese the most enterprising and industrious of the traders in these regions. They are considerably less tainted with piracy than the Malays.

The commerce with Manilla continues to increase. During 1842-43 the gross imports were valued at 323,932 dollars. The most important articles consisted of hemp and ropes, 2,014 piculs; cigars, 20,770,100; sugar, 6,546 piculs; tea, 585 piculs; and sapan wood, 19,306 piculs; it would also appear 5,800 pieces of British piece goods were imported, probably on account of their being unsuitable for the Manilla market. The exports amounted to 127,315 dollars. The chief articles were opium, 49 chests; iron, 3,762 piculs; and British cotton goods, 88 dozens, 60 corges, and 4,189 pieces.

Celebes is the parent country of the Bugis, which name, though properly belonging only to one of the tribes of Celebes, is applied generally to all traders from that island, from the east and south-east coasts of Borneo, and from the islands to the southward and eastward of it. They usually bring sarongs, the produce of their own looms—rattans, wax, tortoise-shell, pearl-shells, sea-weed, tripang, coffee, birds' nests, sandal and bookoo woods, and other articles of minor importance. The number of vessels arriving averages about fifty or sixty annually.

The islands to the castward and southward of Celebes, from which the Bugis bring cargoes to this port, are chiefly Bootoon, Enday or Flores, Selayer, Timor, Booroo, Lombok, Sumbawa, Amboyna, Ceram, and the Aroos and Papua. The articles are the same as those from Celebes, with the addition of cajepoot oil, birds of paradise, and wild nutmegs. The vessels arriving from these places may average about thirty a year. The island of Balli contains several ports, from which upwards of fifty prows annually arrive.

The imports from these islands in 1842-43 were valued at 383,495 dollars, being a slight increase over the previous year. They consisted of coffee, 101 piculs; rice, 96,211 piculs; tobacco, 2,449 piculs. The gross value of the exports amounted to 189,333 dollars. They were, British goods, 6,193 pieces, and 177 corges; opium, 217 chests; and copper tokens valued at 27,079 dollars.

The various ports on the east coast of Sumatra furnish the greatest number of native craft frequenting Singapore, amounting on an average to between three and four hundred annually. Most of these boats come from Apong, Manda, Rantow, and Tabing Tingie, with raw sago. The next in number are those from Campar, Jambie, and Siac, bringing coffee, rice, wax, rattans, ivory, gold-dust, benzoin, dragon's blood, lakha wood, and a few other articles. From Palembang come the lacquered basons and ceree boxes so much in request among the natives; and the best rattan mats are made here. The coast near Siac furnishes in great abundance the trubo, or fish-roe, so universally used, and affords the principal supply of sago, which has now become an article of commerce at Singapore.

The imports from Sumatra, in the year 1842-43, amounted to 284,000 dollars. They were bees' wax, 611 piculs; benzoin, 852 piculs; betel nut, 9,324 piculs; coffee, 2,581 piculs; cotton, 3,660 piculs; raw sago, 201,910 bundles; and specie equal to 57,810 dollars; gold-dust, 677 bungals, valued at 19,705 dollars; rice, 8,153 piculs; pepper, 71,987 piculs, &c. The exports amounted to 188,922. The chief were British goods 5,285 pieces, and 336 corges; country, ditto, 2,116 corges; China crockery, valued at 9,609 dollars; raw silk, 43

piculs; copper tokens, valued at 24,655 dollars, and specie equal to 30,866 dollars.

From the petty places on the west side of the Malay Peninsula, opposite the Sumatra shore, very few articles, and those only of trifling value are brought, consisting chiefly of fowls, cocoa-nuts, paddy, fruit, &c.; but the other ports all furnish tin in large quantities, besides several other articles of less importance. The whole of this coast, however, bears a bad name for piracy. The number of prows arriving amounts to about one hundred every year.

Of the neighbouring islands, Rhio is the one with which the most extensive and constant trade is carried on; the number of boats, or rather trips of a regular set of Chinese boats, called *sampan pucats*, employed being about eight hundred in the year. They bring chiefly pepper and gambier, the produce of Bintang. The chief imports in 1842-1843 were, gambier, thirty-six thousand five hundred and fifty-eight piculs; pepper, two thousand nine hundred and ten piculs; and rice, four thousand one hundred and sixty piculs. From Lingin, or Linga, also, upwards of seventy or eighty boats arrive annually, bringing a great variety of useful produce, but principally pepper, tin, rattans, &c. Billiton sends about twenty-five boats yearly, which bring biche de mer, seaweed, tortoise-shell, wax, &c.

Bungoran (or Great Natunas) and Seanton (or North Anambas) are the next in importance, from which thirty or forty vessels trade with this settlement.

The trade with the rich and flourishing island of Java is of great importance. The imports of the official year 1842 and 1843 exceed those of the preceding year by 209,450 dollars, the gross amount being 1,108,273 dollars. The most important items were, birds' nests, 47¼ piculs,

benzoin, 1,181 piculs; coffee, 5,809 piculs; cotton goods, Malay, 2,423 corges, and 800 dozens; rice, 194,817 piculs; copper, 673 piculs; mace, $72\frac{1}{4}$ piculs; nutmegs, $135\frac{3}{4}$ piculs; cloves, 150 piculs; spirits, valued at 49,411 dollars; sugar, 17,548 piculs; tin, 4,198 piculs; tobacco, 712 corges, and 12 piculs; woollens, valued at 46,002 dollars; and specie equivalent to 196,527 dollars. The exports—451,056 dollars, showing an increase of 28,579 over the preceding year. The principal articles were, country cotton goods, 9,173 corges, and China cotton goods, 152 corges; crockery china, valued at 52,440 dollars; opium, 66 chests; raw silks, 55 piculs; tea, 10,258 boxes and 443 piculs; China paper, valued at 22,520 dollars; and specie, equal to 15,969 dollars. The small quantity of grain produced in Singapore, hardly equal to the consumption of the population for one week, renders it exceedingly desirable to have the means at hand of obtaining a large and constant supply. This Java furnishes, and this alone renders the trade with that island of considerable importance and interest.

The character of the people who carry on this commerce, of which we are as yet only at the commencement, is a question of great importance, but one of which we possess very few materials for judging. The inhabitants of the Archipelago still in a savage state are like other savages of their class; but civilization among the others has assumed a form which perplexes, and probably misleads, a European inquirer, who can only reason from what he knows, and can only draw analogies from his own experience. The Dutch in Java talk of "a respectable Javanese understanding," "a sound Javanese judgment," as if understanding and judgment in those islands took a form as peculiar as cloves and nutmegs; and

Crawford, while admitting that they rarely err in matters connected with their own life, remarks that when a wider range of thought is demanded they are bewildered and betray their incapacity. Surely this is saying nothing more than that they are defective in those qualities of the mind that have never been exercised! Truthful, straightforward, faithful, liberal, humane, good humoured, polite, hospitable, reverential to parents, and grateful to benefactors; they are likewise simple, credulous, superstitious, disregardful of human life, and so ignorant of disinterested friendship that they have not even a word in their language to express the sentiment. When a robber can contrive to throw a handful of earth from a newly opened grave into the house he intends to spoil,—or, better still, into the bed of its master—he proceeds without fear, in the absolute conviction that he has produced a deadly sleep. This would not of itself be very remote from the superstition of Europe; but in these islands the victim himself shares in the delusion:—he lies still while his property is carried off, in the full belief that the enchantment has taken effect, and that he is unable to move hand or foot.

The union of general humanity with disregard of human life may be strange to European ideas, but it is very common among the eastern nations; and it is the more respectable among the people of the Archipelago, that it is rarely conjoined with personal cowardice. In the practice, now we believe never heard of, of "running a muck," the desperado, while attempting the lives of all he chanced to meet, made not the slightest effort to preserve his own. This was not, strictly speaking, madness, but merely a modification of the same feeling which made him stake and lose successively in gaming his money, his land, his wife, his children, his liberty. Running a

muck, however, is not peculiar to the islands—or to the east; although the form it assumes there may be so. The Malays look upon the exploits of the forlorn hope of a European expedition as something precisely similar. With them it wants the motive of military honour. When the army of Saint Louis was before Damietta, that holy king, as his delightful biographer, Joinville, assures us, was with difficulty prevented from spurring alone against the Saracen host. The bishop of Soissons was more fortunate, inasmuch as he ran his muck without interference, and died upon the spears of the infidels. A Malay would not have had the motive of religion, and his exploit would therefore be termed the insane ferocity of a barbarian.

We are not sure that the piracy of the islanders should be classed otherwise than with the private wars of mediæval Europe. The Archipelago is divided into a multitude of independent principalities, each arrogating to itself the right of preying upon the others, and all pursuing this mutual warfare in exact proportion to their want of resources from legitimate commerce. The Bugis are too busy as traders to make any great figure as pirates; the Malays of Borneo have learned the habits of peace from the plodding Chinese and Dutch; and the corsairs on the western shores of that island belong, perhaps almost exclusively, to Mindanao and the Sooloo cluster. Before the advent of the Europeans, the commerce carried on in those seas was probably too extensive to be consistent with any widely diffused piratical habits; and at any rate the islanders, dispossessed by the Dutch, had no other resource. It is now the duty of the strangers of the west to root out the evil they either created or aggravated; and, unfortunately, this cannot be effected without great destruction of human life, for the warn-

ing requires to be terrible indeed which has any effect upon a pirate of this region. Some years ago the Americans did good service on the coast of Sumatra; in 1843, the Dutch took signal vengeance on some of the most daring of the outlaws; but it was left for the English in 1845 to strike a blow at Borneo Proper, and in Melluda Bay, which will not speedily be forgotten. In the bay (at the north-east end of Borneo) the pirate's position was found to consist of three forts, of which two mounted eleven heavy ship's guns, and was, moreover, protected by a boom bound round with ships' cables. The garrison fought desperately, and neither asked nor received quarter.

The condition of the people under their native princes presents the same picture as elsewhere in these regions of tyranny and servility; although there is in great measure wanting the element of a hierarchy to enchain the mind as well as body. Predial slavery is almost unknown; but every petty chief, except in Java, has crowds of slaves, whom he brings up however more as favoured dependants and followers, the trappings of his rank and the tools of his vices. These consist of prisoners of war, persons who voluntarily sell their liberty for a subsistence or protection, criminals condemned to slavery by the laws, and individuals kidnapped without the excuse of national hostility.

Women, it has been observed, occupy a high rank in the social scale. A Malay girl, however, is under as close surveillance as a French girl of the higher ranks, and has as little opportunity of forming a love-match without her parents' consent. The husband always buys his wife, although sometimes the property goes as a settlement or provision for her. The ceremonies take place at her father's house, where they eat rice from the

same vessel; and this has an effect of legality similar to the bride-cake of the Romans, by sharing which the young couple become "parentes conferrenti." Finally, the bride asserts her independence by a fantastic resistance to the completion of her destiny, of which "sponsi vultus matitutinus signa sæpe offert."

Numerous ceremonies attend the course of pregnancy as well as birth; and when at length the wife becomes a mother, so important is the occurrence deemed that it is not unusual for her to change her name. Javanese names are commonly descriptive titles; and if a child, for instance, is called the Beautiful One, the mother is henceforward known, not by her own name, but as the Mother of the Beautiful One. The ceremonial of death is pleasing and affecting. The natural taste or sentiment of the islanders is at that point to which the refinement of England has only recently attained; and their cemeteries are always in a secluded and romantic spot, planted with solemn trees, and consecrated with flowers. These are the true temples of the heart and its affections. The *barbarians* of the eastern seas cannot die in peace unless with the prospect of being laid to rest in that city of the silent where their ancestors repose; and a family festival is held at stated times upon the spot, where the living renew their bonds of love with the dead.

The ceremony of saluting with the lips is unknown. A lover does not touch the palpable moisture of his mistress's lips, but inhales the more ethereal exhalations from her head and neck. The embrace is accompanied by an audible inspiration, and the word which designates it expresses the action of smelling. The ideas of female beauty are the same as in Europe, with the exception of colour; for a cheek to be lovely must be of a faint yellow, the hue of virgin gold. But with this delicacy of taste,

not altogether unintelligible to a European, there is conjoined a conventional abomination which no liberality can palliate. The betel must be chewed habitually even by the fairest mouth; and the lover compares his mistress's lips to the fissure in a ripe pomegranate, presenting red and black stains! The islanders rarely smoke tobacco, but chew the leaf when shred into fine parings; and their consumption of opium, in the manner of the Chinese, is said to be limited only by their means. On the other hand, although they manufacture a sort of beer from rice, and receive spontaneously abundance of a pleasing and intoxicating beverage from the palm tree, they are not addicted to the intemperance of Europe. Their other amusements are gaming of all kinds, which they follow to desperation; cock fighting, although never equalling in cowardly atrocity the "Welsh main" of England; combats of wild animals; hunting the deer, the wild hog, and the tiger; listening to fantastic legends, told in rudely-constructed verse; and a grave, slow, and stately dance, which men and women of all classes perform alike, and which is adapted to occasions of business, pleasure, and even religion, like the dances of the ancient Jews.

The arts, which form their more serious occupations, afford sufficient proof that the islanders are as yet in a low stage of social progress. When dress comes to be thought of by a savage people, it is the part of the women to provide it, their lords being occupied with the chase or other means of obtaining food; and in the Archipelago it is still the province of the sex, and of them alone, to prepare, weave, and dye the cotton which furnishes the clothing of the population. These fabrics, manufactured at unnecessary expense of time and material, are coarse but durable; and as a substitute for calico-printing, they

merely daub the cloth with melted wax in those places where the pattern is not to be drawn, and throw it into the dyeing vat. These stuffs are chiefly made at Celebes; but the Malay and Javanese women also weave a rich and heavy silk from materials imported from China. The Malays are superior goldsmiths, but even the beautiful filigree work of Sumatra is executed by means of a wire-drawer made out of an old iron hoop, a hammer head stuck in a block for an anvil, and a joint of bamboo applied to their own mouths for a blowpipe. Blacksmiths are skilful in the coarser kinds of work, and iron being much scarcer than gold their profession is proportionately esteemed. Crawford says that the blade of the national kris, which every man wears, is merely a bit of ordinary iron; but later writers have discovered among the Dyaks of Borneo an art of tempering the metal so as to enable the sword to perform what would be considered a miracle in Europe. It must be recollected, however, that this quality would be thrown away upon the kris, which being merely intended for stabbing requires no elasticity, nor that exquisite edge with which the Dyaks are said to cut a gun-barrel in two.

The Dyaks, who had the reputation of being merely a race of disgusting cannibals, are described by Earl as a highly interesting people: but with one savage peculiarity. The men are brave, industrious, gentle; and the women beautiful, modest even to bashfulness, and their downcast eyes gleam through long silken lashes in a way which would render captivating much more common features. The little foible we have hinted at is a taste for cutting off people's heads. No Dyak can marry till he has obtained at least one trophy of this kind; but the houses of some of the chiefs are adorned with five hundred. The time is already past, however, when head-

hunting was esteemed a mark of courage; for a man, without any stain upon his honour, may employ another to bring him a few of the indispensable articles. This would seem to indicate the approaching decay of the practice; and already, on the southern coasts, the Dyaks are ashamed of it, and on receiving a visit from their neighbours the Dutch hide away all heads but their own.

The foreign settlers in the Archipelago are chiefly Hindoos from the Deccan, Chinese, Arabs, and Europeans. The Chinese colonists are described as "at once enterprising, keen, laborious, luxurious, sensual, debauched, and pusillanimous." The laws of the empire forbidding them to bring their women, they sometimes marry natives and settle in the country. The Arabs are said to be ambitious, intriguing, and bigoted, but often spirited, fair, and adventurous merchants. The Dutch, so far from improving in their new soil, appear to acquire the vices of the natives without losing their own. The women are cruel to their slaves, and even the blooming complexions we see in Holland degenerate in the Indian islands to the whiteness of death. Of the Spaniards, little worse is told than that they are ignorant and voluptuous. The English are not yet fairly acclimatised, and judgment as regards them must be deferred.

The part of the Asiatic continent on the west of the Philippine islands, is the empire of Anam, which extends along the shores of the China Sea from the Gulf of Siam, to the Gulf of Tonquin. The name is given to the country of those nations who speak the Anam language, but more especially the Cochin Chinese and Tonquinese, although a part of Cambodia and the little state of Siampa, where the language is only partially spoken, are now comprehended within the Anam territory. The

trade actually carried on by these countries with the British settlements is very limited considering their valuable productions, the great range of seaboard they possess, and their numerous navigable rivers. There is little doubt, however, that this will rapidly increase as piracy declines, which is at present the grand check to commerce in the China Sea. The following will give an idea of the existing amount of trade with Singapore.

The ports in Cochin China and Cambodia, from which vessels arrive, are Kangkao and Loknoi in Cambodia, and Turon and Saigon in Cochin China proper. The average number of vessels arriving from these ports are forty annually, bringing sugar, rice, oil, salt, and some other articles of minor importance. The vessels are usually smaller than the Chinese and Siamese junks. The total imports from Cochin China, during the official year 1842 and 1843, were valued at 254,785 dollars, and consisted of raw silk, 149 piculs; rice, 12,010 piculs; sugar, 27,540 piculs; and salt, 15,120 piculs. The gross exports during this period amounted to 227,848 dollars, consisting chiefly of cotton, 1,084 bales, and 985 piculs; British cotton goods, 3,588 pieces; opium, 263 chests; and woollens to the value of 25,378 dollars. During the same time, eighty-two boats, equal to 4,195 tons, arrived from Cochin China.

The whole line of coast from Cambodia Point to the most northern point of Tonquin, is bounded with islands covered with the richest vegetation, and many of them appearing like the tops of mountains rising suddenly from the sea, sometimes to the height of a thousand feet. The productions of Cambodia are similar to those of Siam and Ava; those of Cochin China, besides the exports mentioned above, are tobacco, coarse tea, cinnamon, cotton, pepper, wax, honey, and ivory; while Tonquin is

rich in large timber, and in gold, silver, iron, and tin. The principal foreign commerce is as yet carried on almost exclusively with China, the trade with Siam being constantly interrupted by war. It is a very remarkable sign of the times, however, that the king of Cochin China has recently purchased a steam vessel at Singapore, which is now actually managed, and her engines worked, by his own subjects. His object was to employ her in hostilities against the Siamese; but it is to be hoped that the fine rivers which intersect his own coast will give her better employment.

This prince, however, or rather the government of which he is the administrator for the time being, is decidedly anti-commercial, and it is said that he forbids his subjects to carry the produce of the country abroad under pain of death. But the restriction has only the effect of converting commerce into a species of smuggling, and also of detaching from the soil the more ingenious and adventurous spirits. The Cochin Chinese leave their misgoverned country every year in crowds, and never return; but so little trouble do the English take to make themselves acquainted even with the events most important to themselves, that the locality to which these valuable emigrants repair is at this moment a matter of doubt. The probability is that they will by-and-by be found in some of the Philippine Islands, and on the north-east coast of Borneo; and that, relieved from the fetters of an absurd and tyrannical government, they will play a conspicuous part in the growing commerce of the Archipelago.

Emigration received its first impulse from the religion of the Europeans. The Jesuits of the Propaganda were so successful in their missionary efforts that they imagined it was only requisite to raise the standard of the

cross in order to revolutionize the state, and in the result christianize the whole empire. They forgot, however, that there was a strong government opposed to them; and perhaps their flock had not been well enough taught to be able to lay their hands at once upon those passages in the New Testament which command the shedding of blood and the usurpation of thrones. However this may be, the scheme of the Jesuits failed; two of the reverend fathers obtained the crown of martyrdom, and the rest were expelled; and religious persecution drove the people, as it usually does, to emigration.

Cochin China formed in early times a portion of the Chinese Empire, and the manners and character of the people have not diverged so widely from the common type (which we shall speedily be called upon to examine) as to require a separate description. Tonquin is separated from the Celestial Empire by a wall fifteen feet high and twenty feet thick; but the inhabitants are not more different than might be predicated from their distance from the centre of Chinese civilization, and from their being tainted with many of the customs and vices of the neighbouring Malay race.

BOOK VII.

THE CHINESE EMPIRE.

CHAPTER I.

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

WE have examined at some length, though in miserable proportion to the magnitude of the subject, a vast and populous country which, as may be inferred from the accounts of the wandering Greeks, had long passed its zenith and was already on the decline, three centuries before the Roman arms were first carried among the barbarians of Britain. After leaving the region of India Proper in our progress eastward, we found ourselves among tribes and nations without antiquity, without history, without literature, without refinement; and now again we arrive at the threshold of another empire, occupied by nearly a third part of the human race, where the inhabitants appear to have existed in a state of high

though peculiar civilization long before Europe emerged from barbarism. The mind is confounded as it dwells upon such stupendous facts; and it is not surprising that many of the traversers of those eastern seas should have allowed their perceptions to be not only coloured but controlled by feelings of awe and wonder.

The limits of China Proper are as distinct as those of India, being formed by lofty mountains, inhospitable deserts, and the vast ocean; but the modern empire, overleaping the boundaries of nature, reaches to the frozen wastes of Siberia. Some writers, proceeding on meagre and doubtful etymologies, suppose the Chinese to be a branch of the great Indian family; but, however this may be, their original country was in all probability the elevated tracts on the north-west, whence the stream of population flowed southward and eastward, absorbing the scanty aborigines in its course, till it filled its destined space.

The Chinese annals begin, like those of various other nations, with the beginning of the human race, and they detail, with more or less absurdity, the reigns of emperors and sages down to the year 2337 before Christ. About this time the Mosaic deluge occurred, and the catastrophe is fondly imagined by Christian writers to be described in Chinese history. But the truth is, the country was from all antiquity subjected to an intermittent flood by the inundations of the two great rivers which intersect it, and the lower parts were probably a succession of marshes and lakes, till they were drained by the genius and munificence of numerous successive kings. Confucius, who flourished about the age of Herodotus, and is to the Chinese, as the latter was to the Greeks, the father of history, so far from conveying the idea of a post-diluvial desert, represents the country as an earthly

paradise, inhabited by a happy people, and governed by a virtuous prince. To him is attributed the correction of the calendar by the intercalation at certain times of a lunar month, so as to make the lunar and solar year correspond; and he chose his successor in the empire by the amount of his filial piety. The latter, on his part, was determined in his choice, chiefly by the merit of the individual in drawing off the waters of the deluge.

With the first of these three princes commences the Shoo-king, the earliest historical work of the Chinese, compiled by Confucius six centuries before the Christian era, from materials, it is affirmed, contemporaneous with the transactions. In the history, the third emperor is said to have been nine cubits in height, and the sky to have rained gold for three days at his accession; but these poetical figures throw no more discredit on the general facts, than the assertion that the waters reached to the tops of the mountains confutes the tradition of a more than usually extensive inundation. These three princes, Yaou, Shun, and Yu, are not only personages of history, but of philosophical allegory, furnishing to all modern writers examples of everything that is great and good in Chinese ethics.

At this period (that of the Mosaic Deluge) the Chinese are represented by Confucius—who carefully abstains from meddling with the fabulous era — as living under a regular government, "directed," says Mr. Thornton, in his laborious and valuable history, "by a supreme ruler, who was aided by ministers and an organized series of tribunals." The ministers served as some check upon the monarchical power; and the throne was not hereditary but to a certain extent elective, although the emperor's choice appears always to have been ratified by the nobles. The people, although with no direct voice

in the state, were an important element; and all the ancient philosophers recognise the right of the subjects to deliver themselves from oppression even by regicide. The titles of the great officers in this early kingdom—the traditions of which were collected in the age of Herodotus—are these: president of the council; chairman of the board of agriculture; minister of public instruction; minister of justice; superintendent of public works; ranger of woods and forests; director of public worship; superintendent of music; public censor. Astronomy had made some progress among the people; they measured time by means of clypsedras; they understood enough of mathematics to enable them to construct the great works for draining the country; and, in fine, they possessed written treatises on medicine and natural history.

Such is the account given by "credible" authors; but it seems hardly requisite to believe that a people in this advanced stage of civilization—whose kings had tablets before their palaces for their subjects to inscribe with criticisms on their public conduct—could have passed seventeen centuries before producing an historian, or even a chronicler. We know nothing about the contemporaneous records from which Confucius is said to have compiled; and yet there must have been a considerable succession of editions to have enabled them to come down for seventeen hundred years; while a literary people, like the more modern Chinese, would naturally have taken a pride in perpetuating such memorials of the ancient refinement of their country. Their remote ancestors were in all probability wandering shepherds in the table-land of Thibet, leading their flocks from pasture to pasture, and from side to side of the mountains, as the seasons invited or permitted; and on their becoming

permanent settlers in a less inhospitable region, they no doubt passed through the gradual stages of civilization like other nations. When their written history, however, *commences*, we find the first kings of the historical, as contradistinguished from the fabulous period, invested with the knowledge and refinement of the whole series; and the idea obtrudes itself that in the midst of the obscurity of tradition, Confucius did not absolutely require to have gone back very many generations from himself to find a space for his Shoo-king.

The Chinese, under the three early princes we have named, appear to have been a united people, living quietly under their kings, upon the patriarchal principle of filial obedience. The country in which they had settled, however, was mountainous, and intersected by rivers and marshes, and the separation of masses of the people produced its usual effects. The more distant chiefs became independent as regards power, although professing loyalty to their head as a sentiment: in fact, the feudal regime took place of the patriarchal; and in the dynasty commenced by the last of the three great kings (for the crown now became hereditary), the extent of the imperial domain depended upon the talent of the individual rulers and the fortune of war.* At length the throne was mounted by a prince who was a perfect miracle of cruelty, tyranny, and lust; and whose single virtue of conjugal love availed him nothing, since his empress, unluckily, was as depraved as himself. As a specimen of his stupendous orgies, we are told of his setting his guests, to the number of three thousand, to swim in a tank filled with wine, round the brink of which meats were piled for the gratification of their appetite.

* The Hea, or first dynasty, B.C. 2205—1766.

This Chinese Heliogabalus was deposed by a petty prince who held a fief in the province of Honan.* The new dynasty was hardly different in character from the last, and it ended in a similar way. The fated prince was at first rather debauched than wicked, and appeared to have regarded his ascension to the throne merely as an opportunity for gratifying to their full extent those animal passions, which are not necessarily conjoined with cruelty. He fell under the fascinations, however, of a woman whose fatal beauty enshrined the spirit of a fiend, and under her control the palace became a den of horror unparalleled even in the annals of Rome. One of the amusements of the emperor was to compel his victims to walk along a narrow bar of iron made slippery with grease, and forming a bridge over an immense fire. Historians also speak of the Tower of Stags (a nightmare exaggeration of the Parc aux Serfs!), where his mistress kept her state, surrounded by a naked court of both sexes, drunken with wine and often smeared with blood. The dynasty ended like the last by one of the feudal princes usurping the desecrated throne. When all was lost, the Sardanapalus of the farther east kindled a funeral fire around the Tower of Stags and threw himself into the flames; while the demon who had destroyed him, going forth to meet the victor, scented and jewelled, in the hope of fascinating him by her charms, was seized and beheaded.

Under the new dynasty,† the ancient form of the monarchy appears to have been entirely lost, swallowed up by its child and foe—Feudality. In preceding reigns the number of fiefs had multiplied to an almost infinite

* Ching-tang, the founder of the Shang or second dynasty, B.C. 1766—1122.

† Chow, or third dynasty, B.C. 1122—248.

extent; but the synthetical process now came into play, and the petty chiefs, harassed by each other, attached themselves in separate masses to the wangs, or provincial kings. Various states, within the state, thus arose into consequence; all enemies, open or concealed, of the nominal empire, and each struggling with the rest for the superiority. But when its own energy was completely gone, the conflicting interests of these rivals proved the safeguard of the dynasty for the extraordinary space of eight hundred and seventy-three years; and it was not till the year B.C. 205, that the strongest of the feudal princes pushed the lineal monarch aside, and mounted the throne. The effect of intestine troubles upon the national character was aided by the inroads of barbarians, who gathered round the empire like beasts of prey attracted by the scent of blood. The movement of the Tartar tribes upon this centre of the civilization of eastern Asia, became every year more determined; and the people, goaded on all sides within and without, appear to have met their fortunes with a fierce and desperate spirit.

It is in such troubled times that the doctrines of reformers are preached, and the songs of poets heard above the din of war. The first of the more celebrated men who attempted to pour oil upon these tempestuous waters, was Laou-tse, whose mantle appears to have descended by a circuitous route upon the German philosophers of the mystic school. The great thought which inspires and pervades his writings is Reason, as some call it, or Knowledge, according to others; but it resembles nearly enough to be remarkable the contemporaneous Logos of the Platonic school. This formless, invisible, feelingless, and yet creating, ruling, and preserving power, he described in terms of such suitable mystery,

that no two of his disciples agreed upon its nature; and the consequence was, that although his doctrines are full of a beautiful morality, not inferior to that of the founder of Christianity himself, it took no enduring hold of the public mind.

Fifty-three years later, in 551 B.C., another teacher was born whose theory was better adapted to the singularly practical mind of the Chinese, and which has, consequently, preserved its influence ever since. To understand Confucius, is to understand China. He had no idiosyncrasy. He was an incarnation of the national character, a mouthpiece of the national feelings; and he was only greater than the rest of his countrymen by being imbued with that genius which gives vitality and energy to thoughts that lie dormant, though existing, in the minds of meaner men. He was the mental light which touches, as Dryden expresses it, " the sleeping images of things ;" and, at his appearance, all became visible that before was obscure, all distinct that before was unintelligible, and the tumultuous ideas of a great nation fell gradually into peace, and order, and harmony.

In the course of the view taken in these pages of different nations, it has appeared, we think, sufficiently obvious that mankind are divided, like the meaner animals, into distinct tribes, each, while retaining the general feature of the genus, having instincts and characteristics peculiar to itself. On any other principle, it would be impossible to understand the influence exercised by Confucius over his countrymen. He appealed to no general passions, to no principles that are catholic in man. He allured the intellectual by no metaphysical subtleties, the ignorant by no splendour of imagination, the credulous by no supernatural pretensions: in point of fact, his ethical system, with the exception of the golden

rule, "Do unto others as you would they should do unto you," reproduced in Christianity five hundred years later, never soars beyond the most obvious common place. Confucius, notwithstanding, was hailed as the Messiah of the Chinese; the national mind rested, as it were, upon his writings, and from that day to this it has never advanced a step beyond them.

He did not lose himself in abstractions like Laou-tse, but, tracing back all that appeared estimable in the character of the people to their ancient patriarchal institutions, he extended the habits of a tribe or family to meet the wants and duties of a mighty nation. He fixed upon the earliest historical personages, for no other reason, probably, than the convenient obscurity in which they were left by the lapse of ages, as exemplars of virtue and religion. He showed the reciprocal connection between sovereign and people; the former, the father of the national family whom he was bound to love and protect, and the latter, docile and reverent children whose honour and happiness were identical with those of their parent king. This reciprocity of duty was carried through the whole form of society, and was typified and preserved by ceremonies, the breach of which was a moral crime. Since a son, for instance, owed reverence to his father, it was to be expressed by inclinations and obeisances, and a failure in these was a failure in the respect they implied. The Chinese accepted with avidity this gratuitous code from an individual of an ancient family, it is said, but no power or influence; and as Confucius did not think of disturbing the superstitions of the people, but continued to sacrifice to the mountains and the manes, a revolution, tantamount to the introduction of a new religion, was effected without bloodshed, and almost without opposition.

The Chow dynasty, thus memorable in Chinese history, was set aside, like its predecessor, by one of the feudal princes, and, after a period of anarchy and horror, a new family ascended the throne, which was destined to raise the Chinese empire to a pitch of splendour it had never as yet known.* The literati, who were chiefly followers of Confucius and expounders of his doctrine, had by this time become a powerful body, and a struggle was carried on between them and the successful prince alluded to, which continued throughout nearly his whole reign.† But the emperor—who, to make his success the more remarkable, was a bastard—overcame all opposition; he swallowed up, one by one, the other feudal states; and out of a confused heptarchy constructed a great kingdom. He then turned his arms against the Scythian races who devastated the frontiers; and marching suddenly a great army against them, routed and slaughtered them in prodigious numbers. Several of the border princes had constructed walls of defence against the marauders, but this magnificent prince stretched the line of fortifications from the shores of the Yellow Sea to a length of one thousand five hundred miles, spanning rivers and the summits of mountains, and forming an aggregate of solid masonry equal to that of all the houses in Great Britain, and capable of girding the globe on two of its great circles, with walls each six feet high and two feet thick. A third of the inhabitants of the empire were occupied during only ten years in completing a work which far surpasses all the other prodigies of human labour in the rest of the world.

By the conquests of this prince, the Chinese dominions now extended from the island of Hainan to the deserts of

* The Tsin, or fourth dynasty, B.C. 248—207.

† Ching-wang, afterwards Che-hwang-te.

Tartary, and from the Corean peninsula to the confines of Ava, and the influence of his genius was felt to the farthest limits even of so vast a territory. He constructed magnificent roads throughout the country: and organized statistical inquiries into the productions, trade, and capabilities of the different districts, so as thus to be enabled to equalize taxation and ameliorate the condition of the people.

But Ching-wang was a bastard. He did not merely belong to a usurping dynasty like other princes before him, but he was not even a link in the provincial line of kings to which he assumed to belong. This thought rankled in his breast; and he treated his frail mother with an indignity which seemed impious to the filial feelings of the Chinese. The existing and traditional honours of his rank did not suffice for one who could not claim them as a right. He rejected the title of king, and assumed a name which implies "First August Emperor of the Tsins;" and, instead of imitating the idiomatical humility affected by former princes in speaking of themselves, he employed the word "Eminent" to designate the imperial *ego*, which remains the custom to this day. His capital was a city of palaces, temples, and gardens; these he turned into museums of everything curious or elegant in the conquered states; and the now useless weapons of war, which had bristled round the frontier provinces, were cast into musical instruments, bells, and colossal statues of the genii.

But Ching-wang was still a bastard. The praises of the ancient kings, which it was the business of the Confucian sect to disseminate throughout the empire, were as a sound of hissing and horror to his ears. He destroyed the palaces, the vases, the coins of his predecessors: but

their glory lived in the literature of the country. He strove to efface the memory of their greatness by the magnificence of his progresses: but in vain. He offered sacrifices to the spirits of the mountains and the floods, erecting monuments on the spot in his own praise, and thus linking himself, as it were, with the immaterial world: but everywhere he heard the names of the patriarchal kings of the nation mingling with those of the gods. He grew desperate. He waged war against history itself. He consumed with fire the classical and historical books throughout the entire empire, and introduced a new character for the language, in order to render those which might escape unintelligible! All China was horror-struck at the barbarian infamy of the act; and this splendid tyrant, feeling himself to be an object of universal execration, passed the remainder of his life in wandering to and fro like the evil spirits of his worship, trusting no one with his intended motions even an hour beforehand, till at length, in the year 210 before Christ, death relieved him of an intolerable crown which his genius had rendered illustrious.

On this event, the empire, which had been created and sustained by the talents of a single man, crumbled into its original elements; and the struggle that ensued among the feudal princes for the general throne, terminated in favour of the chief of a petty town, subsequently king of Han, and now the founder of an imperial dynasty, by the name of which the Chinese still love to be called.* The prince began his reign by bestowing upon his father a title signifying "above emperor," and placing him in a seat at the foot of the throne, where, reverently standing himself, he presented

* The Han, or fifth dynasty, B.C. 206—A.D. 220.

him in his court. The Confucians now rose, of course, into rapid distinction; and the emperor published a proclamation inviting the scholars throughout the country to assist him with their advice. The patriarchal principle was thus fully recognised, and during the reign of the dynasty the empire was gradually moulded into that form which it retains to this day, and which warrants the people in styling themselves the Sons of Han. All that precedes this in the moral history of the nation is a struggle, typified by their physical contests for dominion. The one great idea inherent in their nation, or, which is the same thing, implanted by circumstances in their habits, when as yet they fed their flocks on the slopes of the Himalaya or the table-land of Thibet, has now been wrought out by the labours of a philosopher; the combats it has sustained have terminated in triumph, because it forms a portion of the mind or character of the people; and we shall by-and-by find the yoke even of foreign and barbarous tribes unable to disturb it, or to change in any material degree the stereotype of government.

The Han dynasty was in other respects very remarkable. Under it the empire obtained, though it did not retain to the close, its greatest extension. The Tartar tribes owned nominally, if not really, the rule of China even to the shores of the Caspian Sea; and that tumultuous movement of the natives of central Asia, which pushed forward the Goths to the overthrow in after times of the Roman empire, received at least an indirect impetus from the arms of the Sons of Han.

Under these emperors the reveries of Laou-tse, which, wild in themselves, had received a wilder meaning from his followers, acquired a public though temporary influence. The supernatural world was divided into regular classes

from the angels to the demons; every wood had its spirit, every cave its hobgoblin, and these were to be propitiated by sacrifices, and evoked by enchantments; while men, elated by this high fellowship, applied themselves to the art of turning all meaner substances into gold, and devoted their lives to the search after the Waters of Immortality. These superstitions were at this time overcome in China, at least among the educated classes, by the rationalism of Confucius; to reappear in the magic, the philosopher's stone, and the elixir vitæ of Europe, and—fifteen hundred years later—to govern the learned and the noble in the very centre of the civilization of the west. This was the era, likewise, of the introduction of Buddhism into China; although it did not for some time afterwards arrive at any distinguished influence. When the disciples of our Saviour were still alive, an emperor dreamed that the Holy One was born in the west, and he sent ambassadors into India to seek him out. These envoys brought back priests and books, and the mild and virtuous Buddha became eventually a naturalized god of the Chinese, under the name of Foh, losing much of his true sanctity in the process.

The influence acquired by women in these reigns is also worthy of notice. For the first time we find empresses interfering in affairs of state, and openly swaying the government; a circumstance totally at variance with all the prejudices and opinions of the Chinese. With them the duty of women is humility, submission, implicit obedience. They must have no will or wish of their own, but consider it their highest honour, as it is the sole end of their existence, to minister to the comforts and pleasure of their parents and husbands. Such is the doctrine taught at this moment in the female schools, and the author

of the class book was herself a woman. It is not on record that female rule conduced more to the benefit of the nation here than in other tyrannical governments.

A more important as well as more malign influence was exercised by eunuchs, who, by fostering the vices, enfeebling the character, and usurping the power of successive emperors, contributed greatly to the overthrow of a dynasty which had been rendered illustrious by its galaxy of great generals, able statesmen, and celebrated writers. The eunuchs played on a magnificent scale in China, but with circumstances of terrific atrocity, the same game with which, at a later period, in the decline of the Roman empire, they distracted the courts of Constantius, Arcadius, and Honorius. At length, when some of the feudal princes arose to grasp at the empire as it slipped from the enervated hands that held it, the last of the Hans sent in despair the imperial insignia to one of the rivals; and his son, as if to illumine by one closing act of barbarian heroism the fall of his race, retiring with his family to the Hall of Ancestors in the palace, slaughtered his wife and children, and then stabbed himself to the heart.

The new dynasty, whose founder had been able to step into the throne by merely watching the moment when the contending states had exhausted themselves in the struggle, produced no great men.* The wars and revolutions which distinguished its career are without points of redeeming interest. The empire of the Hans continued to crumble away till Southern China was all that remained; and the Tartar tribes, who had formerly rendered obedience as far as the foot of the Imaus and the shores of the Caspian, gathered like beasts of prey

* The Tcin, or seventh dynasty, A.D. 265—420.

around the retreating sovereigns, and founded seventeen principalities within the line of their domain.

The next dynasty was chiefly distinguished by the rapid progress of Buddhism, and the mean capacity and extraordinary wickedness of the emperors.*

The founder of the new usurpation possessed some strength of character, and left the fragments of the empire in a better state than he found them.† Under this short-lived dynasty, the doctrine of the mortality of the soul was preached by a philosopher with enduring success; while others sought as zealously for the elixir of immortality. The country was now divided into the northern and southern empire, between which a struggle ensued like that of the eastern and western empires of Europe, which was not terminated till the year 585.‡

The dynasty of the successful leader was deposed in 619, and the house of Tang succeeded;§ which boasts one able prince, who partly by intrigue and partly by arms, beat off the Turks, then a numerous and formidable tribe of Tartars, and was, in all probability, the means of directing the energies of that people towards Europe, where they still reign in the capital of the Greeks. This was chiefly a military dynasty, and the exploits of the Tang princes fill many of the most interesting pages of Chinese history. All central Asia felt their power, and rang with their deeds of arms; while at home the people, left in comparative freedom, and no longer harassed by the Turks, expended the vigour of

* The Sung, or eighth dynasty, 420—479.

† The Tse, or ninth dynasty, 480—502.

‡ Leang, or tenth dynasty, 502—557.
Chin, or eleventh dynasty, 557—589.
Suy, or twelfth dynasty, 590—618.

§ The Tang, or thirteenth dynasty, 619—907.

their genius in the pursuits of literature, and more especially in poetry. But the blood of Tang degenerated as usual. Women and eunuchs ruled the empire; and the last prince of the race was assassinated by a chief of banditti whom he had called in to assist him against his household foes.

Five successive dynasties now reigned in the short space of fifty-three years, and their career of blood and tyranny deserves no farther notice in an abstract of history.* Printing, indeed, was invented under the second of these races, in the year 930, but it was not perfected till the advent of the Sung family.†

This is an important epoch in the history of China, and one to which the historian has ample means of doing justice, from the enormous mass of materials which now burst from the vigorous and youthful press. The reigning family, however, though celebrated in the annals of the country by the events of their rule, pursued the usual career and met with the usual fate of their predecessors. This career and this fate are wonderfully uniform. First come warlike princes, whose energies are on the constant stretch to maintain themselves in their new and perilous position, and who, by dint of the same valour and genius which had rendered their usurpation possible, leave the empire to their children in splendour and apparent security. Then follow a succession, who make use of the peace they inherit, not to strengthen and defend their dominions, but to elaborate a literature ill adapted to

* How-leang, or fourteenth dynasty, 907—923.
How-tang, or fifteenth dynasty, 924—936.
How-tsin, or sixteenth dynasty, 936—946.
How-han, or seventeenth dynasty, 947—950.
How-chow, or eighteenth dynasty, 951—960.

† Sung, or nineteenth dynasty, 960—1279.

the wants of a great people, and to indulge in the elegant though effeminate pleasures of the palace. Finally, running into wildness and extravagance even in their intellectual studies, the later princes give themselves up to the sorceries of the Taöists, and the idolatries of degenerate Buddhism; while others, having drained the cup of pleasure to the dregs, and found weariness, satiety, and disgust at the bottom, sink—blasé, drunken, and stupified—into the arms of women and eunuchs. So commenced, so waxed, so waned, so closed the most famous dynasties of China; begun and extinguished alike in blood and usurpation.

Hitherto the struggle between the Chinese and Tartars was carried on with something resembling equality; although in point of fact the latter had been insensibly encroaching upon the territories of the former till there came to be a Tartar kingdom within the limits of China. The victorious arms of the Han dynasty had caused a great revolution among the three nations of the desert, but one which had no effect in lessening the danger of their own country. The Turks were now in the extreme west, too distant to be formidable; and it was with the Mongols in the centre and the Manchows, as they were afterwards called, in the east, that China for some centuries past had been summoned to contend. The jealousies of the two rivals proved for a time the salvation of the empire; and in 1234 the eastern Tartars were driven from the northern provinces by the united arms of the Mongols and Chinese. This triumph, however, was of little practical importance, for the Chinese had long sunk into disgrace and contempt by the meanness of their submission. The earlier emperors, like those of Rome, had compromised with their pride by disguising the tribute extorted by the barbarians with the name of gift or sub-

sidy; but this was now so completely at an end, that one of the Sung dynasty paid an annual quit-rent in silk and money for a portion of his own dominions south of the wall. A still more shameful tribute had been paid to the Manchows; for the Scythians, although ugly themselves, had the taste to admire beauty, and the fairest of the Chinese virgins were annually consigned to their savage embraces. De Guignes, in the Histoire des Huns, describes the sorrows of a princess who had been thus sacrificed, and who bewailed in elegant verses her hard fate under a barbarian husband, with sour milk her only drink, raw flesh her only food, and a tent her only palace; and expressed the poetical wish that she were transformed into a bird to fly back to her beloved country.

When this Tartar kingdom within the empire was destroyed,* the greater part of the nation became incorporated with their conquerors; but the rest, retiring to the deserts of Manchowria, remained hidden from the world for four centuries, when we shall find them again marching back to a conquest which, notwithstanding their temporary defeat, they were destined to achieve. It may be imagined, in the mean time, that the Mongols, by whose aid their rivals had thus been driven out of the field, were disposed to profit by the weakness of their allies; and it very soon became apparent that their object was the overthrow of the Chinese government. The fated dynasty was now at its dregs; the emperor was lost in the infamous pleasures of the palace; and at his death, as if Heaven had decreed the fall of the monarchy, there were only three young children left to inherit the tottering throne. "The Sung family," said Kublai Khan, the

* This is called the Kin dynasty, and subsisted for 117 years.

prince of the Mongols, "owed its rise to a minority: it is now the turn of another family!" He had little difficulty in overrunning the northern provinces, and then, advancing into the heart of the country, he captured the boy emperor in his capital, and sent him off a prisoner to the Shamo desert. The second son was proclaimed, and restored to the Canton province, where he died. The third, with all the nobles who remained faithful, took refuge in the fleet, but the Tartars were triumphant even on an unaccustomed element; and the minister, catching up the last scion of the imperial race in his arms, leaped with him into the sea, and was followed in this heroical death by the principal personages on board. Kublai, a lineal descendant of Ghengis, ascended the vacant throne in 1279.*

History usually deals only in military events or political revolutions; and more especially in a brief sketch like this, it is impossible for the reader to trace the moral progress of the people. He must recollect, however, that the fortunes he has followed are those of governments and armies, and that the great body of the natives have been only slowly and indirectly affected either by their successes or reverses. The warrior princes at the commencement of the dynasties aroused the energies with the ancestral pride of their countrymen; the lull which followed, as pilots sat at the stirless helm, amusing themselves with literature and philosophy, while the tokens of the distant storm blackened the horizon unheeded, at once refined their tastes and enfeebled their minds; and the voluptuous profligacy of the later rulers enervating both mind and body, prepared them to receive a new yoke without a murmur.

* The Yuen dynasty, 1279—1367.

The Tartars were not so different from the Chinese as we are apt to imagine. They had long had a footing within the empire, and, in the frontier provinces were completely amalgamated with the people. The marriages of the chiefs with Chinese wives were common; and even while despising the inhabitants of the country as soldiers they beheld, with the reverence of a rude people, their advancement in government, philosophy, and the useful and ornamental arts. The Confucian principle of obedience and respect, besides, was as strong in the Tartars as in the Chinese; for their entire nation had been for many ages one vast camp, in which military discipline was the sole cement which held together the ponderous and apparently incongruous body. Kublai found it neither necessary nor prudent to destroy the institutions he found. He even retained in their posts many of the more influential ministers; and while exciting the disgust of the vain and national Chinese by replacing others with foreigners, his measures were so well taken that no serious disturbance ensued, and his men so wisely chosen that popular approval succeeded to popular indignation. He completed the grand canal, three hundred leagues in length; he perfected the system of posts throughout the empire; he built inns and planted groves for the shelter of travellers; he filled granaries in time of plenty for distribution in time of want; and prepared great quantities of clothes, to be given away as alms to the poor. While thus feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and taking in the stranger, he provided for the convenience of trade—and more especially, no doubt, for the wants of the revenue—by the reintroduction of a species of paper money which had been partially used by the preceding dynasty.

The rule of Kublai, real or nominal, extended from

Siberia to the China Sea, and from the Sea of Japan to the Caspian; but, surrounded by the troubled spirits of the desert, it was necessary to find perpetual employment for them, or be devoured himself. His reign was a series of successful wars by land; but the sea he found an unfavourable field, being frustrated in an attempt to establish his power in Japan and in the Archipelago. But the great Tartar would not swerve from his object, which was nothing less, as it would appear, than the dominion of Asia; till, in 1294, he was compelled to submit to the still greater conqueror Death.

The immediate successors of Kublai, brought up in the luxuries of the imperial palace, the most gorgeous at that time in the world, relied upon the prestige with which the glory of the late emperor invested them, and never dreamed that change could touch a dominion so vast and so solid. Some devoted themselves to elegant literature and the improvement of the people; later princes to the mysteries of Buddhism, which became, in some degree, the state religion; and as the cycle went round, the dregs of the dynasty abandoned themselves, as usual, to priests, women, and eunuchs. The Tartars were by this time acclimatized: they had lost in indolence and debauchery that courage in which consisted their sole superiority, but without losing in this approximation of character the deep hatred in which they were held by the Chinese. The distant provinces threw off their subjection; robbers ravaged the land, and pirates the sea; a minority and a famine came at the same moment; and in less than ninety years after its commencement, the fall of the dynasty was only illumined by some few flashes of dying heroism, and every armed Tartar, who could obtain a horse to aid his flight, spurred back to his native deserts. Some of them, of the royal race, turning to the

west, took refuge with the Manchows, and in process of time marrying with the families of the chiefs, intermingled the blood of the two great tribes.

The proximate cause of this catastrophe was a Chinese of low birth, who, in the midst of the troubles of the time, found means to raise himself by his genius from a servile station to the leadership of a body of the malcontents, and thence to step into the imperial throne.* The new dynasty began their reign with great brilliance. The emperor carried the Tartar war into their own country, and at home made unrelenting war upon the abuses of his palace. He committed the mistake, however, of granting separate principalities to the members of his house; which in the next reign caused a civil war, and the usurpation of the throne by an uncle of the then emperor. The usurper found it necessary to transfer the capital to Peking, as a post of defence against the eastern Tartars, who now made their appearance again on this eventful stage. He was successful, however, in his wars in the desert, and he added Tonquin and Cochin China to the Chinese dominions. After him the fortunes of the dynasty began to wane. The government became weaker, the Tartars stronger; some princes attached themselves to literature, some to Buddhism or Taöism; Cochin China revolted, and was lost to the empire; Japan ravaged the coasts with her privateers; famine came to add to the horrors of misrule; and great numbers of the people, unconstrained by legitimate authority, rose up in their hunger and despair, and traversed the desecrated country in bands of freebooters. A chief of the revolters at length captured Peking, and the emperor, after slaying his family with his own hands, strangled himself.

* The Ming dynasty, 1368—1644.

The rebel was not destined to reign. A brave servant of the government, who was posted on the frontiers, to keep the eastern Tartars in check, made peace with them as a choice between two evils, and called them in to the rescue of the empire. The result will be foreseen. The Manchows, who had long been biding their time with the restless eagerness of vultures watching the dying struggles of mortality, were successful in combating the enemies of the throne; which, as a matter of course, they soon after mounted themselves, thus beginning the foreign and barbarian dynasty which rules the national and polished Chinese to this day.*

Almost the first great step of the new family which has attracted the attention of historians, was their compelling the Chinese to shave their heads, and wear a tie or tail in the Tartar fashion. Sir John F. Davis looks upon the success of the edict as a proof of their authority being by that time thoroughly established, while Mr. Gutzlaff represents it as an expedient for distinguishing their own adherents from the rest of the people. The argument of the former writer is inapplicable where all is strange, surprising, and preternatural. The Manchows were no cloud of barbarians such as China had seen descending like locusts upon her fields: they were comparatively a handful of untutored soldiers of the desert, who, without a single reverse, became masters of a great empire. A panic must have seized the people, who submitted blindly and helplessly to what they no doubt supposed, in their coward's despair, to be the decree of fate.

This dynasty has produced two great men, and is now obviously in its decline. Kang-he began to reign while

* Ta-tsing dynasty, 1634—to the present time.

yet a very young man, and was called upon at the same moment to oppose the son of a famous patriot pirate of Formosa, who had expelled the Dutch from that island, and harassed the Manchow government; an insurrection in the provinces, headed by the general whose fatal miscalculation had called in the Tartars; and an invasion of a Mongol prince from the north. Against all these he was successful. His ascendancy was felt in the remotest regions of Mongolia and Turkistan; while at home, by encouraging the arts and sciences, patronising learned foreigners, and setting his face against all antiquated and absurd customs, he really strove to make the Chinese a distinguished nation, while apparently sapping the foundations on which the imperial regime was built. This truly great prince died after a reign of sixty years; and when the throne had been filled for thirteen years more by one who sought his chief renown in the concoction of edicts, he was succeeded in 1736 by his eldest illegitimate son, Keen-lung.

Keen-lung was something more than a cabinet warrior; although in this capacity he made the Kalmucks of Turkistan and Ele subjects of the empire, and reduced Thibet to the dependency it remains to this day. His expeditions against Burmah and Cochin China, however, were disastrous in the extreme; and at home his subjects were in constant rebellion. Still he pursued his course without swerving; firm, proud, active, and severe; cutting off the heads of his generals if they failed in their enterprises, and striking terror into his enemies by his cruelty. He ruled his dominions with a rod of iron, and consolidated the government with great ability. Finally, he was not only a patron of native learning, but himself both a poet and prose writer, and he collected a magnificent library in the capital.

After reigning sixty years like the great Kang-he, he voluntarily abdicated the throne, and Kea-king succeeded in 1796. We now find the dynasty in its wane; a conclusion that can scarcely be deemed presumptuous, after the numerous examples that have passed in review before us in the preceding pages. The new emperor was at once contemptibly weak, and detestably licentious. He fought only by bribes, and governed only by espionage; and although the banditti set the powers of government at defiance, and on one occasion even attacked the imperial palace, he continued to bury himself in its recesses in the society of play-actors and profligate women. This was another reign of wise and virtuous edicts. On paper, the government was careful and paternal, and the emperor humane, tolerant, and humble-minded; and when, in 1821, he died and left the throne to its present possessor, the latter declared in a proclamation, that "His late Majesty had governed for twenty-five years with caution and industry; that he assiduously aimed at the best possible rule, whence his government was excellent and illustrious; and that, during its continuance, both in the court and the country, order, tranquillity, and happiness prevailed!"

From the moment Taou-qwang mounted the throne, it was obvious that he possessed neither the great and good qualities of some of his ancestors, nor the weakness and wickedness of others. Without genius, or even vanity, he was entirely the creature of circumstances. He pursued the career of his predecessor, merely because he found himself in the track. He opposed rebellion by bribes; and thus getting into his power small bodies, one by one, of the revolters, he murdered them in detail. Unable, from the failing revenue, to keep up a great standing army, he endeavoured by means of trickery

and finesse to preserve the appearance of vigour in the administration. But the system of corruption introduced by government was as energetic against government as in its service: even the forces, inadequate as they were, existed in great part only in imagination, the officers receiving the pay of thousands of men of straw; and the imperial edicts, long evaded or opposed, now became objects of open laughter and contempt. Shut up in the privacy of the palace, he was little known even to his grandees, but it was conjectured that he possessed neither great virtues nor great vices; although the extinction of the last traces of foreign science might have served to show a narrowness of mind sufficient of itself, if we reason by historical analogy, to fix his place among the dregs of his dynasty.

Up till this reign, the intercourse of Europeans had no sensible effect upon the destinies of the country; but we are now arrived at an important epoch at which the nations of the west begin, as regards China, to exercise an influence which threatens eventually to revolutionize the whole eastern hemisphere. This portion of our narrative, however, we must defer entering upon, till an examination of the institutions and character of the Chinese prepares us for foreseeing events and estimating results with greater ease and accuracy.

In the mean time, it cannot fail to strike even the most unobservant reader that the preceding sketch breaks off at a moment when the elements of some great catastrophe are in motion. In the history of a mighty nation, however, whose monarchy has lasted for thousands of years, those petty spaces of time, which are so important to us men of to-day, are of little account; and we cannot speculate on the close of the Manchow dynasty with anything approaching to accuracy. It is obvious, notwith-

standing, that the government has fallen into an imbecility which cannot last very long; and we know that the Tartars, one and all, are objects of detestation to the myriads of Chinese by whom they are surrounded. Even the emigrants to Singapore and the other parts of the Archipelago carry abroad with them their antipathies or their patriotism; and members of societies, whose sworn object is the overthrow of this foreign and now feeble dynasty, are thus spread over the whole eastern seas, as well as within the empire. It is at this exciting moment that the British flag has been planted on the soil of China; and without presuming to lift the veil of futurity, or even to guess at what lies beyond, it is yet natural and reasonable that we should watch the progress of events with intense interest and almost awful expectation.

CHAPTER II.

GEOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

The country which passed through so many revolutions is now at its greatest extent; for it is needless to except that temporary, and in some quarters merely nominal dominion, which extended to the shores of the Caspian. The Chinese empire is separated on the north by mountain ranges, from the frozen regions of Asiatic Russia; its eastern coasts are washed by the sea of Okhotsk, the Sea of Japan, and the Yellow Sea; its southern boundaries are the China Sea, the Gulf of Tonquin, the empire of Anam, the Burman empire, and the Himalaya mountains; and on the west are the various tribes of Independent Tartary, between some of which and the Chinese there is hardly any distinguishable frontier line. The greatest extent of this immense area is two thousand miles from north to south, and three thousand six hundred miles from east to west.

China Proper is of a much more compact shape. It

is comprehended within an irregular circle, formed by Manchowria, Mongolia, Thibet, Burmah, Anam, and the ocean; and extends about one thousand two hundred geographical miles, whether measured from east to west or from north to south. Beyond this circle the dependencies, or colonies of the empire, would be of little importance but for the turbulent character of their inhabitants. As it is, however, these are what the barbarians were to Rome; but with this remarkable difference, that a Tartar conqueror becomes a Chinese prince, and his wild followers either subside into homogeneous particles of the population, or, in the character of soldiers, undertake the defence of the country against their own brethren of the desert. The cause may, perhaps, be looked for in the patriarchal principle on which the governments of both nations rest, as well as in the fundamental similarity of character in the people. The inroads of the Scythian nations into Europe produced great changes, by the collision of great political principles and great moral antagonisms; while the Chinese are nothing more than reclaimed Tartars, reclaiming other Tartars by the influence of the same circumstances to which they submitted themselves.

Let us glance round the external circle, before devoting a few pages to the attempt to convey some general idea of China Proper.

The north-east corner of the empire, in its larger meaning, is formed by Manchowria, a country which extends northward to Siberia, with the peninsula of Corea as its southern extremity, and the island of Segalien that of the north-east; the latter serving as a connecting link between the continent of Asia and the island chain of Japan. The southern districts of Manchowria have had the advantage of a change of inhabitants; the greater

part of the Tartars having followed their chiefs to the conquest of China, while the Chinese of the neighbouring provinces carried their arts and their industry into the territory thus left vacant by war. Those of the soldiers who returned to their old abodes were too small in number to do much mischief; and the result was that the emperor Keen-lung broke out into raptures on finding the home of his ancestors converted into a sort of Tartar paradise. The climate, notwithstanding, is cold, the country being one sheet of ice for six months in the year; and yet, besides wheat, peas, and rhubarb, which are the chief articles of exportation, the vine, chestnut, and walnut, and the apricot, peach, and mulberry, grow in abundance.

A small river is the natural boundary between Manchowria and its peninsula of Corea, but political prejudices form a less easily surmountable line of separation. The Manchow policy is, of course, to a certain extent exclusive, like that of the rest of the empire; but the king of Corea absolutely interdicts his subjects, on pain of death, from holding communication with any nation whatever without his express permission. This prince pays tribute to China, but perhaps more for the purpose of securing by treaty the non-interference of the Manchows than from coercion, as the peninsula was never entirely conquered by China. The Coreans, however, are a cowardly race, bending in abject submission beneath the tyranny of their kings, and making hardly any use of a rich and productive country in adding to their comforts and enjoyments.

Farther north, Manchowria has a wild and shelterless sea-coast, beset by fogs and gales, and by not less dangerous visitors, immense floating meadows drifting on the Japan Sea. The farther north the country extends, the

ruder is the position of the inhabitants. Even just beyond Corea, they are too indolent to cultivate the earth, but live on the banks of rivers which afford pasture for the cattle, and dispute the country with bears and tigers. They are nominally a nation of soldiers, although now quite unpractised in the art of war; and they sweep on horseback along their desert steppes in the same wild freedom as when they mustered their numbers to wrest the dominion of China from kindred barbarians. This part of the country is the Siberia of the Chinese, where political offenders are sent to expatiate their crimes; but the north-west district is still more used as a penal settlement. A range of mountains separates the exiles of China from those of Russia; and when the latter make their escape into the Celestial Empire they are sent back by the conscientious authorities, and are probably thankful for their rejection by a country still less endurable than their own.

Extending to the west and south is the region of Mongolia, whence have issued from time to time those human swarms whose devastations spread from the farthest limits of Asia to those of Europe. The fate of the Mongols, acclimatized in China and India, driven out of one country and crushed in the other, appears to have extinguished the roving spirit of their countrymen, who have ever since been satisfied with the adventures of the desert. Those of them who settled in Manchowria assisted in the second overthrow of the empire by the barbarians; but the rest have been contented with the steppes of Central Asia, where they pay tribute to the Manchow dynasty, receiving *presents* in return of greater value, together with Chinese princesses for wives, and suffering themselves every now and then, when unruly, to be conquered by bribes, and their chiefs to be carried pri-

soners to China in order to be emasculated by luxury and ease.

The Altai mountains separate this province from Siberia; to the south is the Great Wall and Thibet; and on the west is the province of Ele, consisting of Soungaria and Eastern Turkistan. Numerous distinct tribes of Mongols inhabit this vast area; but to such perfection is the pacific system of the Chinese carried, that disturbances are of rare occurrence. The princes, besides presents and handsome wives, receive titles of honour; their sons are educated at the Chinese court; they are themselves surrounded with spies; and the priests of Buddha, who govern their consciences, are in the imperial pay. If we add to this that the tribes are separated from each other by uninhabitable deserts, it will appear no wonder that the peace of the empire is preserved against its ancient foes. What part Mongolia may play at the next overthrow of the Tartar dynasty will depend greatly on the prudence of the Chinese insurgents; but certainly so long as the alliance of the Mongols and Manchows is preserved, it will render revolutions a more difficult game than heretofore. The men of this Tartar race are ugly but well formed, and the women ugly but amiable. Polygamy is permitted but rarely practised, for the wives are companions not drudges. They live in conical tents; exchange their horses, felt, and furs with the Chinese caravans for silks, cottons, and the refuse of the tea market; feed their flocks in the neighbouring pastures; educate their children in their own language; amuse their leisure with the study of history and poetry; and in the midst of hardships, not unfrequently aggravated by hunger, are cheerful and happy. When the pastures fail they strike their felt houses simultaneously; pile their goods and

children on camels; and men and women alike leaping on horseback, they set forth in quest of a new oasis, awakening the echoes of the desert with their songs.

Thus much may suffice for a general picture, but, in so vast a country, it may well be supposed that there are great diversities, both of a moral and physical nature. The industrious and gregarious habits of the Chinese have overleaped their wall; and in its neighbourhood are found the towns, gardens, and cultivated fields of China extending into the desert. In the opposite quarter, on the other hand, where a line of mountains separates the Tartar domain from the ice-fields of Siberia, all is barrenness and gloom, with pinnacles of eternal snow looking down upon frozen rivers and dreary wastes unrelieved by a single blade of vegetation. Midway between these two extremes is a third extraordinary feature in this extraordinary country,—the desert of Kobi or Shamo. From the great height of this wilderness above the sea, it is exposed to all the severity of a northern winter, while in summer the heat is so excessive that the whole vast expanse seems burnt up as if with fire.

It may seem surprising that the Russians were not contented with their own Siberia, without attempting the subduction of another country as wild and dreary; but had it not been for the energy of the beginners of the Manchow dynasty, the dominion of the colossus of the north, would, in all probability, have extended before now to the wall of China. At the time, however, when the pioneers of Russia crossed the Amoor, a great river which intersects a portion of Mongolia and the whole of Manchowria, the new Tartar emperors were in all the flush and vigour of conquest, their own triumphant tribes were loyal to a man, and the neighbouring Mongols were

submissive either through terror or affection. According to the national policy, the territory seized by the Russians was necessary to China; and the half-frozen, half-famished troops of the Tsar made no figure in the border war that commenced; till at length, in 1689, a treaty was dictated under the guns of the Chinese, according to which the Russians abandoned the navigation of the Amoor, and withdrew into Siberia. By the results of this war, Russia eventually gained a regular and permanent trade with China, which had long been the object of her desires; but afterwards, on the discovery of Kamschatka and the islands between Asia and America, she had reason to lament her loss of the navigation of the Amoor, which would have greatly facilitated the importation of the products of these new countries.

The government of Ele, composed of Soungaria and Turkistan, lies on the west of Mongolia. These are the original seats of the Kalmucks, who are a remnant of those Huns that returned from the west after the empire of Attila fell in pieces; and of the Turks, or Turkomans, whose countrymen followed in the career of the Huns, and retain to this day one of the finest territories in Europe. The former are Buddhists, and differ little in life, character, and physiognomy from the Mongols; whilst the latter are Mahomedans, and have a slender figure, a European visage, a yellow complexion, and a black beard. The chief riches of both consist in their flocks and herds; but the Turkomans generally live in towns, and adopt, to some extent, the other habits of civilization.

Thibet, which lies on the west and south of Turkistan, and on the south of Mongolia, we have already traversed as one of the countries on the frontiers of India. The southern and eastern boundaries of the empire are the

Himalaya, the Burman empire, the empire of Anam, and the ocean.

Within the line thus briefly indicated, lies China Proper; a country which must be considered as highly favoured by nature, since the seasons, although exhibiting considerable rigour both in cold and heat, are devoid of the terrible extremes to which the surrounding regions are subjected. The kingdom is parcelled into eighteen provinces; and the arrangement of these having been founded on grand natural divisions, the topographical system is very simple. The southern provinces are separated from the rest by a mountain-chain, which appears to be a production of the line of the Himalaya.* Between this chain and the Hoang-he, or Yellow River, are the provinces of Central China, with the mighty stream of the Yang-tse-Keang intersecting the country in the midst;† while from the former river the northern provinces extend to the Great Wall.‡ These eighteen provinces are regarded by their inhabitants as the Centre of the World—the Flowery Land—the Celestial Kingdom: and it is no wonder that they should be so. Looking towards the ocean, a Chinese, besides some pirate islands either subdued or still independent, knows only the Japan group, which received its civilization, if not its population, from his own ancestors; on the east, he finds only the tributary peninsula of Corea, a comparative wilderness; on the west, dreary and forlorn, lies the barren table-land of Thibet; and on the north are the horrid deserts of Scythia, framed in by mountains covered with

* These are called Yun-nan, Kwei-choo, Kwang-se, Kwang-tung, and Fokien.

† These provinces are Ho-nan, Keang-soo, Gan-hway, Hoo-pih, Hoo-nan, Keang-se, Tse-chaen, and Che-keang.

‡ Pe-che-le, Shan-se, Shen-se, Kan-suh, and Shan-tung.

perpetual snow. These comprised, till lately, his world; for the "outside barbarians," who came sneaking and cringing for leave to purchase the productions of his country, and of whose form of civilization he was profoundly ignorant, he could only set down as the denizens of some distant and paltry isles hardly worthy of a place in his system of geography.

Of the four parallels we have incidentally named, the Great Wall has already received as much notice as is necessary in a work of this kind. The two rivers are only secondary to the Amazon and the Mississippi of the western world. They both rise in the country of Kokonor, that angle of Mongolia which lies between China Proper and Thibet. The Yellow River, as its name describes, is a river of mud, and its rapidity is so great as to render it almost useless for navigation. As a servant, it is of little utility but for the purposes of fecundation; and as a master, its power is so dangerous that the government is kept in constant anxiety, and put to enormous expense; notwithstanding which its embankments frequently give way, and the country is flooded for thirty miles around. The deposits it makes on rushing into the Yellow Sea are so great as to lessen visibly the depth of water to an extent of eighty miles from the coast. The sources of the Yang-tse-Keang are not far from those of the Yellow River; and after rolling along widely separate paths the two great streams reach the sea within two degrees of each other. The former is two thousand two hundred and eighty-one miles, and the latter one thousand nine hundred and eighty-four miles in length. The Yang-tse-Keang, in its swift passage, receives innumerable rivers into its bosom, as well as the superfluous waters of some extensive lakes; and being connected by means of canals with almost the

whole empire is justly looked upon as the great artery of China. Its valley comprises the most fertile part of the country, and numerous towns and several important cities stand upon its banks; but the Yellow River is the most celebrated in history, and is an object of profound veneration to the people.

After the Wall and these two rivers, the lofty range forming the fourth parallel is composed of the most considerable mountains in China. Another range partially divides the northern from the central provinces; but, with these exceptions, the surface, although varied in elevation, and generally rising towards the west, is not mountainous. These inequalities are sufficient to act upon the winds in the interior, and to aid in producing a climate as distant from the enervating influence of the south as from the extreme rigour of the north. Neither the monsoons of the tropics, nor those fearful tornadoes classicised by the word typhoon, extend far beyond Canton. The other winds blow in general along the coast; the north-easterly prevailing in the Formosa channel during the greater part of the year, and the north-westerly farther to the north.

Four of the five northern provinces, the first seat of the Chinese after they extended themselves from the deserts of Thibet, partake of the characteristics of Manchowria, from which they are separated only by the Wall. Millet is the chief produce, rice being raised with difficulty. All this, however, is classic ground to the Chinese; and more especially the fifth province, Shantung, which, although very little more to the south, is highly cultivated. This was the cradle of Confucius; and here the petty kings learned the lessons of his wisdom, till at length his fame spread over the whole em-

pire, and he who was only a philosopher received divine honours as a god.

The north-eastern angle of the country, between Shantung and Manchowria, is composed of the province of Pe-che-loo, where stands Pekin the present capital. It is said to be twenty-seven miles in circumference, not including the suburbs, and is encircled by a wall thirty feet in height and twenty in breadth, defended by outworks and batteries, with a ditch around all. Within these enclosures are two cities, the inner and outer; the former, built by the Tartars, and containing the imperial residence. This inner city is itself divided into three, with the palace in the centre; and the whole is regarded by the Tartars as forming an impregnable fortress. The principal suburbs are handsome, with the shop-fronts richly carved and gilded; and Lord Macartney's embassy, on entering the southern gate, passed through ten miles of street before reaching the eastern gate. The streets were one hundred and forty feet in breadth, paved on both sides for foot-passengers, and the middle kept clean by scavengers, and sprinkled with water to lay the dust. The houses, though small, are described as being very elegant, so far as the exterior is concerned. The pillars before the shops were gilded and painted, with a flag fixed at the top, inscribed with the name and business of the occupant; and on the roofs of the dwelling-houses were open galleries, where, in fine weather, the ladies of the family assembled as in a drawing-room.

Besides the shopkeepers, who exhibit their wares in a fanciful and attractive manner, a considerable part of the retail business of this metropolis is carried on by hawkers, who sling their goods in a basket at each end of a bamboo placed across the shoulders. The cries of Pekin would no doubt be as interesting as the cries of

London. The chief difference in this respect between the two great capitals is, that the Babylon of Asia is thronged with barbers, who, in addition to the other instruments of their vocation, carry about with them a chair, a stove, and a vessel of water, and operate upon their customers in the street. There are also itinerant auctioneers, such as are seen only at the country fairs in England, who, mounted upon a platform, dispense their jokes and their commodities to the grinning population. In the midst of all, a stately funeral procession may be observed winding through the crowded thoroughfare; the coffin, canopied with satin enriched with gold and flowers, borne on a platform supported by fifty or sixty men marching with solemn step, and followed by a band of music giving forth a wailing dirge, and by the friends of the deceased in black and white dresses. Some of the streets are in reality five or six miles in length; but for the sake of convenience they receive a different name at reasonable distances, which is painted in gilded characters on an ornamental gateway with a coloured and varnished roof. The narrower streets or lanes are closed at each end with small lattice gates, which are shut during the night; but all the more considerable thoroughfares are guarded both day and night by a military police, who, besides their swords, are furnished with long whips.

It is necessary, however, to correct the impressions of comfort and refinement that may be conveyed by this description, for everything in China is *make-believe*. The houses with such handsome exteriors are low, inconvenient, and dirty. They have no variety but in the outside painting, and, as an eye-witness observes, are in reality nothing better than temporary booths, erected for show, and without any view to strength or durability. They are rarely more than one story in height; and, with the

exception of a palace or a pagoda here and there, the whole immense city is overtopped by its walls. The population, however, is full of life, bustle, and energy. The "sacred thirst of gold" is seen in every face, and in no quarter of the world are there more unquestionable tokens of a nation of shopkeepers. The observant reader will not underrate these details. They speak eloquently of the real position of China as regards what Europeans are accustomed to term civilization; and the space they occupy is not improperly bestowed, since the same description would apply, with trifling modifications, to every city in the kingdom. Pekin, however, is a colossus. It is reckoned by Mr. Gutzlaff to contain, including the suburbs, two million inhabitants.

This immense congregation of human beings, placed in a flat, sandy, and sterile province on the confines of the Tartarian wilderness, is not dependent for subsistence upon coast navigation, in which vessels are obliged to round the great promontory of Shan-tung, which divides the Gulf of Pe-che-le from the Yellow Sea. The Grand Canal stretches south and south-east from the neighbourhood of Pekin, to a distance, including the natural rivers it impresses into its service, of six hundred geographical miles; and communicating with all the great waters of the interior, it forms a grand highway by which the products of the whole kingdom may be poured into the capital. But this is not its greatest use, for the existence of Pekin is not necessary to China; it is a gigantic drain for those waters which, in the early epochs of the empire, rendered the south of China an uninhabitable swamp, and which still ever and anon threaten it with devastation. It is in general carried along the lowest levels; but one great city near the Yellow River extends for three miles along its banks, so much below the foundations that an

accident might at any time sweep a vast population to instantaneous destruction. China owes this astonishing work chiefly to the first Tartar dynasty.

The first of the central provinces on the sea-coast, proceeding southwards, was formerly called Keang-nan, although now politically divided into two; and it may be reckoned, in many respects, the most important territory in China. Its northern division is watered by the Yellow River, and its southern, by the Yang-tse-Keang, and both discharge themselves into the sea on its coasts. The Imperial Canal runs through its entire length, connecting the two great rivers, and serving as a drain for the innumerable smaller streams that irrigate the country, and for the superfluous water of various lakes. The surface, throughout a considerable part of its extent, is a continued plain, prodigiously fertile, but liable, from its level and the excess of water, to frequent inundations. The coast is almost a perfect flat, and hardly visible from the sea, where vessels are frequently lost on the sands of the Yellow River, stretching out scores of miles from the land. Every inch of this precious territory is richly cultivated, producing chiefly grain, green tea, silk, and cotton; and yet the people are kept in starvation by their own numbers and the exactions of the government. Nanking, the capital, was formerly the capital of the empire; and is now a ruined Pekin, where cultivated fields have taken the place of populous streets, and an industrious population, in turn, usurped the idle courts and gardens of princes. The nankeens, although taking their name from the city, belong in fact to the province, where every cottage housewife has her loom. The Nanking satins are also celebrated in every corner of the world. The city of Soo-choo is remarkable for its silk stuffs and embroidery, as well as for its water streets, that

render it a Venice of the far east; and the region around it, dotted with lakes and other varieties of fine scenery, has been called the Chinese Arcadia.

Honan, the next province westward, is considered the centre of the country, and, consequently, of the globe. It is designated the "Garden of China," on account of the fertility of its soil and other natural advantages; and here the ancient monarchs held their court, till the invasions of the Tartars called them towards the frontiers. Beyond Honan, west and south, lies Tze-chuen, the largest of the provinces, whose surface of plains and mountains, fertile fields and barren deserts, supports a population extremely small when compared with the vastness of its area. On the west, the frontier is guarded against the Kokonor Tartars by numerous fortresses, and most of the mountain passes are strongly fortified.

Returning towards the east, but in a lower parallel, the province of Hoo-quang, now divided into two, presents the same features as that of Honan, of which it is the southern boundary, and contains, at least, one first-rate city. Keang-se is the next, whose manufactures of porcelain are the most celebrated in the empire. The city of King-te-ching, where these works are carried on, is situated in a plain, in the midst of an amphitheatre of mountains, and when viewed at night from the steeps around, its hundreds of blazing furnaces give it the appearance of a lake of fire. Che-keang, the last of the central provinces according to our classification, brings us again to the eastern coast, and is the smallest of the whole, but not the least important nor the least populous. It is as highly cultivated as any part of China, and the inhabitants are said to be superior in ingenuity and polish of manners to the rest of their countrymen. The capital,

Hang-choo, is reckoned the best, in point of architecture, of the Chinese towns; but the aquatic city, built on the neighbouring canals, is the most curious. The manufacture of silks gives employment here to sixty thousand persons, and the shops are enriched with all the other luxuries of China. Ningpo, one of the great emporia of the empire, and the Chusan group of islands, we shall have occasion to mention in another place.

About the middle of this province ends the Imperial canal, which, throughout nearly its entire length, presents the most characteristic as well as the most agreeable objects in Chinese scenery. It would be easy to find glowing descriptions of this remarkable picture; but we prefer taking the following sentences from the unpractised pen of a writer, one of Lord Macartney's suite, who tries in vain to repress the ideas that are struggling in his breast, and succeeds in suggesting them by his very difficulties and misgivings.

"I never felt an interval of astonishment at the villages, towns, and cities, with which, if I may use the expression, the banks of this river are thronged; as well as the myriads of people they poured forth as we passed by, or anchored near them . . . . . . On one side of the river a verdant plain of vast extent, covered with herds of cattle and flocks of sheep, stretched on to a range of lofty mountains that rose boldly in the horizon; while the whole country on the opposite side of the river was shaded with forests, in whose openings we could distinguish the humble cottage of the peasant, and the painted palace of the mandarin . . . . . . The slightest bend of the river presents a new prospect, or a new view of what has been already seen. Every city differs from the last; no two villages have the same form; and a multiplicity of circumstances occur, which occasion de-

cided differences in the landscape figure of similar objects, that are incommunicable by any art of verbal description. . . . . . The pencil of a master might here communicate some general idea of the peculiar beauties of the country through which we passed, and the continual variations of it; but it is not in the power of language to convey any correct image even of the individual objects, much less of the picture formed of them. When I mention that I have seen forests and gardens, mountains and valleys, the palace and the cottage, the city and the village, the pagoda and the mill, with a variety of subordinate but heightening circumstances in one view I certainly inform my readers of the constituent parts of the prospect; but to give them the least notion of their actual arrangement and relative situation, of their proportions and contrast, of their general distance from the eye, and the comparative distance from each other, is beyond any exertion of verbal description."

The chain of mountains we have mentioned separates the four last central provinces from those of the south; although Kwei-choo cannot strictly be said to belong exclusively to either parallel, as it stretches across the ridge on both sides. This has been called the Switzerland of China, and presents the extraordinary feature of an independent and even hostile population in the midst of a vast and united empire. The Chinese, in fact, cannot yet be said to have conquered the country; for in these fastnesses the aborigines still make their last stand, and a people whose sway extends to the mountain ramparts of Siberia, content themselves with building fortresses against some tribes of highlanders in the middle of their richest provinces!

Fokein is the most eastern of the southern provinces, and being mountainous, and unproductive except in tea,

and the coast deeply indented and surrounded with fine islands, the inhabitants engage largely in foreign trade and supply the mass of emigrants to the Indian Archipelago and its opposite continent. Amoy is the principal emporium; but the capital, Fou-choo-foo, carries on a considerable trade with the northern provinces. This coast is famous in Chinese history for its patriotic pirates, who resisted the Tartar power to the last; and on an island near the shore, on a wild and beautiful spot, stands the celebrated temple of Mee-choo, where pilgrim mariners flock from all parts of the sea to worship, in her own peculiar shrine, that virgin-goddess whose image adorns their cabins, and to which they are accustomed to offer incense and tea. The greatest island on this coast, or elsewhere in the Chinese waters, is Formosa, which supplies Fokein with rice, the northern provinces with sugar, and the foreign markets with camphor. Although not more than one hundred miles from the main land, it appears to have been unknown to the Chinese till the middle of the fifteenth century, and even now the eastern shore remains unexplored.

Quang-tung, the most southerly province, is the best known to Europeans, at least so far as its capital, which they call Canton, and the fine river it dominates, are concerned. Hong Kong is one of the islands of the Archipelago at the entrance of this river; but Hainan, more to the south, almost rivals Formosa in size, being one hundred and forty-eight miles in length and eighty-three in breadth. In the centre of the island there are gold mines, and it is likewise rich in sugar, tobacco, cotton, and areca nut, which form its staple exports. The interior, however, is still in possession of the aborigines, who resemble the Malays of the Indian Archipelago, and are in a state of almost complete barbarism.

The province on the main land is well watered and fertile in the plains, and the mountains are said to contain copper and iron. The population, however, is greater than the means of comfortable subsistence, and many of the meanest and worst classes are forced by sheer want to emigrate to India. On the sea-coast, where the enterprising spirit of the Fokien people prevails, the emigrants appear to be quite a different race; and from them are supplied many of the colonists of Borneo and miners of Banca. Anam and Siam receive temporary settlers from Hainan; and the inhabitants of Canton, who are ingenious and teachable, do not scruple to embark as sailors, cooks, and stewards. The population of the capital has been estimated at a million and a quarter, including the suburbs and the inhabitants of eighty or ninety thousand boats, whose business calls them but seldom to the dry land. Cloth and silk form the staple manufactures, which are carried on without the aid of machinery.

The two remaining provinces, Quang-se and Yun-nan, are mountainous and thinly inhabited by a half-civilized population, bearing more resemblance to their neighbours beyond the frontiers, the Tonquinese and Burmese, than to their own countrymen. The highlanders of these provinces are in very incomplete subjection to the Chinese government, which rules them rather by bribes than by force of arms. In 1832, a great rebellion arose, in which a very characteristic stratagem was employed by the insurgents. An army of goats was sent down at night upon the Chinese camp, with lights fastened to their horns; and while the imperial soldiers were rattling off their musketry at these enemies, the mountaineers poured upon them by another route, and made prodigious havoc. Towards the north, the country rises in height till the Yun-nan mountains appear to taper

to the clouds. Some fortresses mark the frontier lines against Burmah; but a confused congeries of steeps and rocks, on the side of the savage tribes in the neighbourhood of Thibet, leave in some doubt the exact boundaries of the Celestial Empire.

CHAPTER III.

GOVERNMENT, LAWS, AND INSTITUTIONS.

It will now be proper to inquire into the political system by means of which so vast an empire is held together under a single head; by means of which an ingenious, intelligent, and generally refined people, to the number of between three and four hundred millions, are made to yield the same obedience to a handful of foreign barbarians as to their native princes. China, on account of the extraordinary anomalies she presents to European ideas, has been called a Sealed Book, which many great minds have attempted in vain to read: but perhaps, after all, the difficulty is more imaginary than real. It may be that the so-called anomalies are homogeneous, that they are the operations of one national character, acting and acted upon by different circumstances; and if this is the case, the mystery will vanish, although the facts will not be the less surprising.

The Chinese, from their earliest recorded existence as

a nation, have been accustomed to nearly the same form of government, although administered at different times by different dynasties. It was to the rule they were attached, not to the family; and when Confucius laid down the law alike to princes and subjects, he was merely the expositor of the national mind, taking for the materials of his philosophy the pre-existing ideas and predilections of the people. The Tartars did not conquer so much as they were conquered. They brought an immense accession of territory to the empire; and, while nominally reigning, became themselves subject, submitting to the manners, laws, and government of the quasi conquered country,—in fact, becoming Chinese. If we turn to the historical sketch in a former chapter, we shall find that the Mongol dynasty was not overturned because it was Tartar, but submitted to the common destiny of *all* the imperial families. So long as the princes took the trouble of keeping the kingdom in order the people were satisfied, and they cared little by what means this was accomplished; but as soon as the sceptre became too heavy for the enervated hands that held it they withdrew their allegiance.

The paucity of numbers of the Manchows has little to do with the question; for they are sufficient, if necessary, to officer the nation, and it is to the office not the person the Chinese pay obedience. Neither is the insignificance of their military force of much consequence, for the dregs (as we hold them to be) of the reigning dynasty rule, not by arms, but by intrigue, espionage, and bribes. Their recent resistance to the British was probably their last military effort, and it resulted in their usual expedient, the payment of a sum of money to buy off the consequences of defeat. This is entirely a government of

expedience and finance, and when the treasury is fairly empty, it must fall to the ground.

Before proceeding to describe the actual system of government, we must be permitted further to observe, that it has been customary to ascribe to it the formation of the national character. The Chinese, we are told, are orderly, industrious, and cheerful, because of such and such institutions which repress licentiousness, reward labour, and promote happiness. But is it not more reasonable to suppose that it is the government which has been formed by the national character, and that it has thus acquired a permanence altogether without example? The lazzaroni of Italy are more cheerful than the industrious Chinese, but no one thinks of attributing this to the beneficent working of their institutions. The Chinese in fact appear to be orderly, industrious, and cheerful from constitution; and they are so alike in the midst of poverty and misrule at home, and foreign laws and customs abroad.

The grand principle of the government was in full force in the families of the Jewish patriarchs. It is composed of the right of parental authority, and the duty of filial obedience. The emperor is the father of the nation; and he disposes of his children as he pleases, even to death. He is their prophet, priest, and king. He is the mediator between them and Heaven; and he alone is to receive blame for their misfortunes, or praise for their prosperity. When a national reverse occurs, he accuses himself of want of merit to deserve prosperity, or want of talent to command it; and he mulcts himself in remissions of revenue to the people who suffer through his fault. Thus the fallibility of the Son of Heaven is acknowledged by the constitution; and even his very character of parent may depend upon his evident possession of the parental instincts. A tyrant,

therefore, or an incapable, may be deposed or slain without breach of duty; and, in submitting implicitly to a new dynasty established by treachery or violence, the subjects may still remain faithful to the monarchy.

Such is the Right of the emperor; while the Duty of the people, except in extreme cases of general and obvious tyranny or incapacity, is submission. A son submits to a father, a servant to a master, a young person to an old person, an inferior to a superior, throughout the whole ascent of office and the whole gradations of society, till the sentiment of universal respect reaches the emperor, the supreme lord of all. A father is emphatically the master of his family, although he may be flogged for murdering his children; but if a son commits the treason of even beating either of his parents, he is not only put to death himself but his kindred are degraded, and even the guilty neighbourhood or district made to suffer.

In Europe the poor are virtually subjected to the rich, but they have no compensation in the subjection of others to them; while in China all men, however poor, are lords and chiefs. But their authority only extends downwards. All above them are their masters, all below them their subjects. This is the essence of the whole system of rights and duties. In Europe, with its customs of primogeniture, its hereditary titles, its entailed properties, it would be a system of intolerable slavery, such as could not fail to be broken in pieces by the natural expansion of the human mind; but in China, where there is no principle of permanence in rank or fortune, it is a system of comparative freedom. There, wealth, office, and distinction are open to all men; a parent while educating his son not only puts him in the way of promotion, but all belonging to him; a family rises with the fortunes of any one of its members, for

there is no taboo which preserves the vulgar great from the contact of the vulgar small; and thus the elements of society are in perpetual motion, and that distinction of classes in which European slavery consists essentially unknown.

With the exception of some Tartar chieftains, there is little aristocracy in China but that of office; and there being no law of primogeniture but that which constitutes the eldest son the family steward, there is no wealth but that of industry. A man does not rise to rank or distinction by becoming rich: he disposes of his superfluous acquisitions in the purchase of a public appointment. But the same thing may be effected by means of the acquisitions of learning, for the humblest scholar may rise to the highest office in the state; and thus the whole nation—for the whole nation may be said in general terms to be both industrious and educated—is bound by the indissoluble ties of individual and family interest to the general system.

The head of the system is the emperor, the fountain of honour and office. He is the personification of the great Thought which laboured in the uninformed breasts of the shepherds of the Himalaya, and of which Confucius was the first distinct expositor. He is the idol in which the people worship an abstract idea. As a man he is fallible—he may not even be legitimate in birth or Chinese in race,—but as the chief of the nation he is the Son of Heaven, and receives the honours of a god. The *mot* of the splendid Louis, "l'êtat, c'est moi," is here a simple fact. A Chinese does not encumber his mind with distinctions: to him the emperor is the government—the state—the empire. This imperial abstraction is ubiquitous. His worship takes place in the most distant provinces as well as in the palace; and even in the

latter, during the most solemn acts of adoration, he may be personally invisible. But when he appears it is in the human form, clothed in all the meekness and modesty of mere mortal nature. Conscious that all the pomp in the world would show us meanness, when compared with his abstracted greatness, he affects no state; he is the most plainly dressed of his court; and, running into the extreme of humility, when designating himself he frequently uses a word implying want of merit, or even common ability.

One step from the sublime and we come to the ridiculous. The paternal government, throughout all the gradations of office and of society, prides itself on being formed after the model of family government. Without disturbing the gravity of state, or dishonouring the individuals, the emperor chastises his ministers—those unruly children—with a cane or a whip; they in turn thrash the courtiers beneath them; and so on, down to the police-officer who horsewhips the people to make them get out of the way, and the father who signifies his love for his offspring by the benevolent use of the rod. The whole nation are floggers and floggees to a man; and a well-ordered household it must be confessed they prove under the discipline.

So far from being surprised at the permanence of a system by which individuals are thus dove-tailed into masses, and masses into the aggregate of the nation, one is apt to fall into the opposite error, and wonder how anything should ever occur to disturb or vitiate it. But here the facts of history come to our assistance, and we perceive the absolute hollowness of what appears at first sight so solid and substantial. The government being founded on reason, and justice, and parental beneficence, its theory demands that nothing shall be concealed. The

ancient as well as the modern emperors besought criticism on their actions; they deplored their errors and incapacity; and took credit for nothing but good intentions and the most affectionate solicitude for the welfare of their subjects. This was all very well if we could suppose an unbroken line of great and good personages; but, unluckily being a part of the system and by no means spontaneous in individuals, the very same professions of virtuous candour were likewise to be made by the weak and wicked, the cruel, the tyrannical, and the debauched. Even the great principle of filial piety concurred in swelling the bloated mass of hypocrisy; for each prince (as in the case of his present majesty) was compelled to represent his predecessor, however base or imbecile, as a paragon of virtue and genius. As the dynasty waned, the original foundations of the government crumbled away till it rested on mere professions; trickery took the place of policy, and blustering of courage; peace was preserved by bribes, fidelity by espionage; and the contagion of corruption descended from the emperor to the meanest official of the state. The destruction of the imperial family at length wound up all; and a new usurpation commenced with the reality of vigour; and in some cases perhaps with a sincere determination to rule after the traditional manner of the ancient kings. Confucius says, that when a prince is virtuous it is as easy to sway an empire as to turn the finger; and this may be true in China, where the government theoretically is so nicely adapted to the character of the people. But when the virtue in which consists the capacity to govern is absent, then comes the difficulty—then comes the gradual and long-forgiving disgust of a people reluctant to be driven out of the beaten path of their prejudices and predilec-

tions—and then, in fine, come insurrection, anarchy, and revolution.

It is important, likewise, to observe, before going into particulars, that while the patriarchal principle of the government was the most likely of all others to keep the nation apart, the low political condition of the surrounding countries must have fostered the pride of the Chinese in their refinement, their strength, and their numbers, and taught them habitually to consider the inhabitants of the rest of the world as an inferior race. In vain barbarian hordes rushed into the bosom of the population: they were swallowed up and lost in Chinese civilization. In vain conquerors seated themselves on the throne of the empire: they were instantaneously transformed into Chinese monarchs. In vain new religions came to turn the hearts and souls of the people: the very gods of the strangers were themselves converted to that Nationality which is the grand object of Chinese worship.

The emperor has four prime ministers, with two or more assistants of nearly equal rank. Generally speaking, they are old men, who have climbed to this highest rank of a subject through various gradations of office. When the master, therefore, is of an indolent disposition, they are the true rulers of the country; but, if otherwise, they are the mere echoes of the imperial will. There is sometimes a Tartar or a Chinese party in the cabinet, and sometimes an individual minister sways the whole by his genius; but there is no principle of adhesion among them as in Europe. When one is degraded—sent as a governor to Manchowria, or condemned to guard as a private sentry the court he formerly directed—the rest, without a murmur, set themselves to elect a successor. The emperor being the

national priest as well as king, his ministers exercise the sacerdotal functions, and assist or represent him in religious ceremonies. This is an important part of their duty, for public calamities are supposed to be occasioned by neglect of the gods.

Immediately in connection with the cabinet are various offices for the transaction of business in its different departments, in which the mandarins and clerks amount to many hundreds; but, independently of the ministers, there is a privy council composed of the executive as the former is of the deliberative officers of government, and selected individually from all departments of the state. This is a modern and unconstitutional body, called into existence, it is to be presumed, for the mere purpose of saving the emperor trouble and responsibility; but its proceedings being more sensibly felt, it commands more fear and respect than the cabinet itself.

There are six supreme boards at Peking, through which the emperor and his ministers conduct the affairs of the state.

The Board of Offices takes charge of all civil appointments and promotions, except those made immediately by the emperor; it hears the results of a grand triennial examination of the merits of the functionaries, and controls the penal sentences; it grants leave of absence, &c.; and keeps a complete register of the personnel of office throughout the kingdom. These officers, called by the generic name of Mandarins, are divided into nine ranks, each subdivided again into two, and distinguished by the colour and material of the button or knob of the cap. The gradations descend from the titular guardians of the reigning monarch, through all the ramifications of public employment, down to the petty village magistrates; and even beyond these there is a numerous class

of attendants and clerks, who, although not styled mandarins, have an official character, and are distinguished by wearing red cow's hair on their caps, with an ornament of brass wire at the top.

The most interesting and peculiar function of this board is the superintendence of the educational or literary appointments; for in China no man is constitutionally considered fit to transact the business of the state without being acquainted with its history and the works of its classical writers, and without being able to compose in his own language, with precision and elegance, both in prose and verse. In most of the countries of Europe (where the Chinese are usually regarded as objects of derision), such discipline of the understanding is not merely not considered necessary, but is practically a bar to public employment; but curiously enough, this refinement of the east is reduced to a level even with the gross barbarism of the west, by the same peculiarity of the Chinese mind which retains them to this day under their ancient constitution, a hard-working, orderly, and contented people. But for this peculiarity, the magnificent patronage bestowed for so many ages upon literature must before now have made the Chinese the masters of the intellectual world; but, unhappily, it is not genius but mere scholarship they encourage, and so far from offering premia for the progress of mind, they chain it down to one determinate point by insurmountable restrictions. This filial people must not dare to go beyond the wisdom of their fathers. The attempt would be laughed down as absurd if not punished as petit treason. The classics form the utmost horizon of their minds; and it must be the sole business of their literati to understand, to illustrate, to reproduce, in an endless variety of sameness, that which has been already written.

There are examiners in each smaller district who make a circuit of the schools under their charge twice a year, and select the ablest students. These repair at a certain time of the year to the head office of the district, where their numbers are weeded by another examination, and the names of the successful candidates are posted in the streets. So far from this determining their fate, however, they must undergo a third examination, held triennially under the chancellor of the province before they are in a condition to compete even for the lowest degree of literary honours. This triennial examination causes immense excitement in China, since the students are taken from all classes of the people; the cities where it is held are thronged by crowds from the remotest districts of the province; and when at last the names of the successful aspirants are published, they are hailed by universal acclamations, the families of the young men post bills on their houses to announce their good fortune to the public, and the lists are eagerly conned over even in the humblest huts of the peasantry.

The examination continues three days for a lower, and nine days for a higher degree. The students of the former class, according to their various degrees of merit, receive either a small present or the bastinado, or neither one nor other. The higher students, when successful, are at once eligible for government offices; and they repair, at the public expense, to the capital, where they are examined by mandarins of rank, and finally by the emperor in person. It would be agreeable to close our details here; but unluckily in China, as in every other country, the practice falls far short of the theory. Bribery and corruption are still more common passports to office than literary merit; and, more especially under the present emperor the practice of selling appointments

to the highest bidder, instead of being under legal restrictions, is nearly universal. A curious memorial on this subject was presented in 1822 by two provincial officers, of which the following is a condensation from the original given by Mr. Gutzlaff:—

"We have heard that the sale of the magistracy and other high offices originated under the emperors Hwan and Ling, of the Han dynasty. But alas! the disgrace of selling office under the present dynasty is greater than this: and why? The revenues thus procured at the close of the Han dynasty were still appropriated to the public service, but our dynasty puts the whole of such fees into its private purse. From this state of things it is that the nets are thrown to get gain, and gain-seeking statesmen are numerous. Our dynasty commenced the sale of offices in the tenth year of Teën-tsung (1637) to supply money for the use of the state, and to collect together human talent. For many of the sages and worthies of antiquity rose from the midst of fish and salt, and markets and public wells (that is, the rabble), and those who bought office frequently brought into it a kind of talent not supplied by those who obtained it solely by literary merit. The intention of this was good, and under these circumstances it was provided by imperial orders that annually there should be employed eleven literary statesmen, and eight who had bought appointments; by which means there was a majority of the learned in all the departments of government. But at this moment there are unemployed by government more than five thousand of the Tsin-sze's graduates, and more than twenty-seven thousand of the Keu-jin graduates, and those who are now waiting to be employed, obtained their rank since eighteen examinations (more than thirty years ago).

"Thus the magistrate, Seang-yang, a priest, prohibited

by law from holding office, bought his claim to one; the Taou-taou of Ning-po, from being a common highwayman, obtained office by purchase; besides others of the vilest parentage, eight of whom have been accused and convicted within a few years. Of late none have been impeached, and the numbers, therefore, of such men are unknown. When this document shall be laid before your majesty, the members of the cabinet will no doubt make a pretext that the resources of the country are inadequate, and thereby darkly insinuate their slanderous aspersions: we have, therefore, made a calculation.—If the expenses for imperial pageantry were at once done away with, it would save as much in one year as the sale of offices fetches in ten years. For the expense of flowers and rouge at the Tung-tsaou harem is annually one hundred thousand taëls. The pay of the writing boys in the harem amounts to one hundred and twenty thousand taëls. The repair of the Yuen-ming-yuen costs no less than two hundred thousand taëls. The establishment of Jehol four hundred and eighty thousand taëls. The great officers who superintend the Yuen-ming-yuen gardens get in salaries one hundred and sixty thousand taëls, besides two hundred and fifty thousand taëls presented to the women of those parks. If these few items of expense were abolished, there would be a saving of more than a million taëls of useless expenditure. Talent might be brought forward in the service of the country, and the people's wealth secured. If your majesty deems what we have now stated to be right, and will act thereon in government, the desires of the manes of your majesty's sacred ancestors might be realized. The army, nation, and poor people would have cause to rejoice. Should our heads be laid on the block, or should we suffer death by being boiled in a cauldron, we stand prepared."

This document describes so exactly the condition of China, that it would be unpardonable to have omitted it; but the reply of the emperor — who took no other notice of the subject — is likewise admirably characteristic. "The report of Yuen-seën and his colleague is extremely lucid, and shows them to be faithful statesmen, who are grieved for the state of their country, and who bear the spirit of the great statesmen of antiquity. Since the days of Yun-chwang and Hung-leang-keën, such men have scarcely appeared!"

The functions of the Board of Revenue are described by its name. It has two presidents and four vice-presidents, and is divided into various chambers, each taking charge of certain provinces and the collection of certain tributes. The emperor Kang-he, of the present dynasty, introduced a capitation tax; but it was so much disrelished by the people, that the amount was afterwards added to the existing land tax, which now averages, according to Mr. Gutzlaff, one taël or about six shillings and eightpence per English acre. Mr. Medhurst, however, gives the most intelligible account of the revenue. In China Proper he tells us there are six hundred and forty million, five hundred and seventy-nine thousand, three hundred and eighty-one English acres under cultivation, which support a population of three hundred and sixty-one million, two hundred and twenty-one thousand, nine hundred souls, not including about a million for the inhabitants of Formosa and Chinese Tartary. The revenue arises chiefly from the land tax, paid partly in money and partly in grain and other articles, and amounts, together with customs, to 54,471,322*l.* In addition to the land tax and customs on foreign trade, Mr. Gutzlaff mentions the import on salt and ginseng, both government monopolies, the former yielding between seven and

eight million, and the latter about two million taëls; a tax on merchandize of between four and five million taëls; and an impost upon shopkeepers—of which the pawnbrokers pay one half—four million taëls. Duties are not levied on teas consumed on the spot, but merely on those that leave the district either for exportation or consumption in other provinces.

This paltry revenue for so great a country is expended in the pensions of nobles and their daughters; the salaries of mandarins; the pay of the military; the expenses of charity schools and of numberless hospitals; the maintenance of the Buddhist as well as national temples; the travelling expenses of students, mandarins, Mongol kings, &c.; the repairs of the banks of rivers; the post-office system; and, finally, the imperial household establishment. Mr. Medhurst says that the pay of a Chinese soldier averages only four pence a day; that the salary of the highest officer under government is 8000*l.* a year, of which there are not many; that there is not more than one officer to ten thousand people; and that most of these have not more than 50*l.* a year. Very little is known of the difference between income and expenditure, but it is believed that of late years the balance has been pretty steadily against the government.

The Board of Rites is peculiarly Chinese. The constitution of the country is based upon a moral sentiment; but as moral sentiments are not amenable to laws, it was necessary to give form and body, as it were, to an abstraction. It would be absurd, for instance, to order a man, under a penalty, to love and honour his parents in his heart; and he is therefore compelled to pay them the external reverence which is supposed to imply the inward feeling. On this foundation stands the fantastic superstructure presided over by the Board of Rites. The senti-

ment of filial piety, infinitely modified, runs throughout the whole frame of society, and in every modification the abstraction has to be represented by a modification of form or ceremony. All these are defined by the laws; they are subjects of grave discussion, and severe decision; the most trivial rule of etiquette belongs as much to the institutions of the Chinese as the ceremonial of sacrifices to the gods. The board is divided into four chambers, one devoted to the maintenance of etiquette in general; another to the sacrificial department; another to the duties of visitors and guests; and another to the rules of festivities and rejoicings. The ceremonial of coronations, &c., is not nearly so absurd and slavish as in England, if we take into account the general manners of the two nations, the individual dignity which exists in one country and in the other is merged in official dignity, and, above all, the peculiar sentiment which refines, we had almost said sublimes, the prostrations of the Chinese. The commonest village festival, however, in the most remote province, is regulated by rules as strict; and the rural barber would no more presume to take undue precedence than the court lady to have a single pearl in her head-dress, or a single thread in her fringe, more than is permitted by law.

Perhaps the most interesting ceremony is that of the classical symposion, held by the successful students in the imperial palace; but the most extraordinary belongs to the sacrifices, in which each deity has his rank and allowance as rigorously prescribed as if he were the slave, not the patron, of the worshippers. The national love of order and form extends even to heaven itself, and brings the gods and the genii into the system of the Celestial Empire.

The Military Board rules over the united service of

army and navy, between which no distinction is made. Fighting is the same thing, whether on land or sea; and even the war junks are rarely different from merchant vessels, except in carrying some iron guns, and being so crowded that the men have scarcely room to move. "Cedant arma togæ" is the rule in China. The whole military force is under civil command; and the ill-paid and unhonoured officers are at the mercy of the literary mandarins. The military are the police of the country, and they have also the charge of the government post establishment, which extends its continuous chains of relays and guards to the remotest confines of the empire. The Tartar troops are mustered under eight standards and form a standing army of eighty thousand men; nominally increased to seven hundred thousand by the Chinese troops and militia. The Tartars are the best paid; but the officers of both, even of the highest rank, are subject to corporal punishment with the bamboo, and to be exposed in the moveable pillory. Forts are built not only along the coast and the frontiers, but in the interior of the country there is hardly a commanding point that is not dominated by something which has at least the appearance of a stronghold. At sea the same odd anomalies present themselves as on land. So late as 1809 the pirates had blockaded the coast to such an extent that the Chinese fleet dared not show itself; while now, with scarcely a blow having been struck, there are far fewer outrages committed on the waters of China than in the Archipelago. The explanation is, that the pacific emperor *bought* the outlawed squadron, elevated its masters to rank, and thus converted open enemies into as open subjects and partisans.

The Board of Punishments presides over the judicial department of the whole empire. China is said to have had

written laws ever since the epoch of the Deluge, and every succeeding dynasty has added to, or improved upon, the code of the last. If we consider therefore that the decrees of the emperors become laws the moment they are promulgated, we shall be able to form some idea of the stupendous aggregate. Only a portion of the general code is known in England by Sir G. Staunton's translation; but the work has received high praise for its clearness, conciseness, and good sense. The same commendation, however, cannot be given to the Chinese collection of statutes and laws described by Mr. Gutzlaff, which, although of higher authority, appears to be one mass of confusion.

Under such a government treason is of course denounced as the greatest crime of which human nature can be guilty; and in order that no offender may escape, the meshes of the law are thrown as widely around as possible. The expression "traitorous natives," for instance, used so frequently in the imperial proclamations, may mean either conspirators against the government, or simply persons who have held intercourse with foreigners, or who have renounced their allegiance to their country by emigrating to another. Death is the penalty annexed to this crime, and sometimes it is inflicted in the manner popularly described as cutting into ten thousand pieces. The traitor is fastened to a post, and the executioner, after tearing the skin of his head over his eyes, mangles the rest of the body, or cuts off the limbs piecemeal. High treason is not visited merely upon the actual perpetrator, but upon all his relations in the first degree; for blood so poisonous must not be allowed to circulate in human veins. Akin to treason is sacrilege, which is not confined to offences against the property of the gods. That of the emperor is considered

as sacred; and both are protected by the penalty of decapitation, the most infamous of the capital punishments. The murder of relations is the next crime, and then common murder, of which the original contriver alone is beheaded, while the others concerned suffer by the less ignominious death of strangulation, in which the breast of the offender is compressed by a cord, drawn tighter and tighter till he expires. Accidental homicide is redeemable by a fine; but the law does not regard in this light the homicides that are the result of brutality or even carelessness, however unintentional they may be. In such cases the offenders suffer death. If a man, however, discovers his wife in the act of infidelity, he may slay both parties without rendering himself amenable even to the slightest law of homicide. Physicians have no right to jeopardize people's lives by trying experiments unknown to the wisdom of their ancestors; and the practitioner who loses a patient with whom he has been guilty of the innovation must redeem himself from the penalty of homicide. Rape and unnatural crimes, including sorcery, are capital.

Quarrelling and fighting in so dense a population, and where the government is comparatively so weak, are grave offences which, unless severely interdicted by the law, might lead to public commotions and rebellion. Hence the distinction between the kinds of accidental death, and hence also the punishment of a kick or a cuff as a public offence, and even of opprobrious language, as having a tendency to disturb the tranquillity of this cautious and pacific people. A man, however, may strike his wife with impunity; whereas if she makes a return in kind this domestic rebellion is punished with a hundred blows. Robbery with violence is capital; theft only nominally so in the more aggravated cases.

The lighter punishments annexed to these and other crimes are banishment, the wooden collar or walking pillory, and the bamboo. Banishment is the expulsion for a time, or for life, from one province to another, or from China Proper into Tartary. The wooden collar is of a square figure, with a hole in the middle for the criminal's neck, and so broad that he cannot reach his mouth with his hand, but must be fed by another. It is from fifty to one hundred pounds weight, and so embarrassing either in sitting or standing—for lying down is impossible — that its wearer is sometimes relieved by death before his term of punishment expires.

But the bamboo is the national instrument of punishment, applicable in every case, from the murder of a son by his father down to a scolding match in the street, and to every person, from the prime minister down to the domestic slave. The paternal magistrate sits with the rods before him for the correction of filial China; and when the culprit has heard his sentence, kneeling, the lictors lay him prone upon the floor and chastise him with all their force, either with the larger or smaller bamboo, according to his deserts. The lower degree of punishment is from four to twenty blows, the higher from twenty to forty; but according to the letter of the law these numbers are from twenty to fifty, and from sixty to one hundred, the practical difference being set down to the clemency of the emperor.

Before this scene takes place, it must be said, the complainant has gained admission to the court by striking either upon a bason or drum hung at the door, according to the nature of his case; and he, together with the defendant and witnesses, is placed, kneeling, before the magistrate, with instruments of torture ready by their sides, the case of bamboos in front, and the lictors ranged

in dreadful array around. The prisoner is not defended by counsel, but a statement of the case is written out by a notary, and all the evidence in like manner recorded. In common cases the decision of the mandarin is final; but where the offence requires a heavier punishment than bambooing, the prisoner has the right of appeal through several successive courts till he reaches the imperial palace. If he will not acknowledge the justice of his sentence, however, the magistrate is at liberty to put the question by torture even a second time, which is done by squeezing the ankles or the fingers between pieces of wood. In cases of high treason, the criminal is tortured into the betrayal of his accomplices by having his skin torn down in strips by the executioner.

The prison is not, theoretically, a place of punishment, but merely of detention till sentence is pronounced; but in practice it is the same bloated nuisance, the disgrace of which is only now beginning to be wiped away from Europe. The treatment depends on the keeper's fees; and with accused persons who cannot bribe, hunger and every other extremity of wretchedness are added to the weight of their literal chains. The abuse is so obvious, that every now and then, when a public calamity occurs, it is attributed to the anger of Heaven aroused by this special cause, and an inquiry is instituted into the state of the prisons. The result is the punishment of the mandarins and gaolers, and the relief of some prisoners and release of others; but the system itself must be left untouched as a portion of the venerable constitution of the empire, so that a new crop of abuses springs gradually up, to be mowed down in due time as before.

Although the law permits a husband to chastise his wife, no female can be sent to prison but for murder

or adultery, the latter of which crimes is as deep in dye as the other; since it is a breach of conjugal allegiance—in fact a family sedition. Generally the softer sex, and the aged of both sexes, are treated with lenity; and even the son of an old widow is looked upon with indulgence by the law, for the sake of his mother. But the humanity of the Chinese legislators is still more strikingly exhibited in the case of a death-warrant, which cannot be executed till it has passed successively under the consideration of the provincial judges, the lieutenant-governor, and governor, the criminal board, the judicial board, and finally the emperor himself. When it has at length reached the throne, it is then the subject of renewed consultation; and before the irrevocable fiat is given, the Son of Heaven must prepare himself for his high and melancholy duty by long fasting and sacrifices to the gods.

The Board of Public Works is not entirely architectural. It superintends likewise, in another department, the manufacture of government-stores, arms, and ammunition; in a third, the rivers, the dykes against the inroads of the sea, the high roads, the works for irrigation, the building of the grain-junks and men-of-war, and the imperial ice-cellars at Peking; and in a fourth the mausoleums, the public funerals of meritorious persons, the manufacture of trinkets and other articles of luxury for the emperor, and, in fine, the mint. The duty of this tribunal, like that of the rest, is to see that everything under its control is made or done according to established usage; as all articles, from a jewel to a junk, from a sedan to a palace, have their constitutional form; and that the tombs of the departed great encroach not an inch upon the space allotted to their rank by those universal laws which bring gods

and men, the living and the dead, within the same subjection.

Such are the six courts of Peking, which are the six fountains of government subordinate to the emperor and his ministers, and which might be supposed at a first glance to include all China within their precincts. But there is still another institution, beyond, above, around, and within all these; and it is remarkable that the very same expedient for controlling the abuses of power should have been hit upon by the Roman legislators, and that it should have contributed greatly, as Montesquieu observes, to the stability of the Republic. This is the Censorship; and the court, as originally constituted in China, might have been addressed almost in the very words of Decius to Valerian:—"Happy Valerian! happy in the general approbation of the senate and of the Roman republic! Accept the censorship of mankind, and judge of our manners. You will select those who deserve to continue members of the senate; you will restore the equestrian order to its ancient splendour; you will improve the revenue, yet moderate the public burthens. You will distinguish its regular classes, the various and infinite multitude of citizens, and accurately review the military strength, the wealth, the virtue, and the resources of Rome. Your decisions shall obtain the force of laws. The army, the palace, the ministers of justice, and the great officers of the empire, are all subject to your tribunal."

When the office of censor was usurped by the Cæsars its utility was lost; and it seems extraordinary to find it in China coexisting with a tyrannical government. But this is only one of many proofs that the Chinese tyranny was originally of a nature quite unknown in the western

world. In fact the progress or procession of government seems to have been entirely different in the two hemispheres. In Europe the empire was erected upon the ruins of former institutions, and in this new regime the censorship—the remnant of a free and virtuous age—would have been anomalous and ridiculous. It was refused by the noble Trajan and the Antonines as an honour far too high for their deserts, and fell into desuetude from its simple antagonism to the spirit of supreme monarchy. In China, on the other hand, the imperial system was merely a more perfect development of the original form of government. As a tribe was nothing more than an aggregate of families, so the nation was nothing more than an aggregate of tribes; with the authority of fathers and chiefs centring in one supreme lord. The people did not belong to the emperor, but the emperor to the people. He ruled for their benefit, he laboured for their subsistence, he studied for their good. The supremacy of the people is declared in every line of the ancient books; and it is not wonderful that legislators who defended regicide in the cause of freedom and virtue should have instituted a censorship over the actions of government.

But in China, still more frequently than elsewhere, we meet with discrepancies between theory and practice, between the real and the ideal. We have already given a remarkable specimen of Chinese censure, and of the philosophical spirit in which it is listened to by government;* and even from this alone may be collected the actual position and utility of the institution. It is, as regards its original purpose, a form or a shadow; and as regards its actual functions a mere conservative

* Page 203.

engine of government. The people applaud when the emperor listens with humility to its well-sounding but harmless thunders; and they mention with respect the names of various patriots who have really endeavoured to use its power as an instrument of public utility. But the prestige is nearly all that remains. It has become a gigantic machine for espionage, by means of which the government is kept constantly acquainted with the conduct of the various branches of the executive throughout the empire, and with the political feelings of the people. It has six bureaux for watching the proceedings of the six great tribunals of the capital, besides branches in all the provinces for taking cognizance of matters connected with justice, revenue, police, charity, education, religion, morals, and manners. Its chief attribute, however, it must be said, is Mercy. It is its business to plead the cause of the oppressed, to arraign tyrannical magistrates, to visit and reform the prisons, to scrutinize sentences of death. If these duties were properly executed by so all-pervading an institution, China would be the happiest country in the world.

In glancing at these institutions as a whole, faulty and anomalous as they may be, we can hardly fail to be convinced that the Chinese are by far the most enlightened people of Asia. At the same time it must not be forgotten that we know less about them than about any other great nation in the world. Those fragments of their laws with which we are acquainted through Sir George Staunton, have been pronounced by high authority to be distinguished by simplicity, coherency, and good sense; but there are many others which could hardly be matched even in the puranas of the Hindoos for tyranny and absurdity. But although the eulogium pronounced by Staunton and Davis would appear to be hardly based

on sufficient data, the proposal of the former to "judge of the tree by its fruits" is nothing more than reasonable; and if we do this we shall certainly find the condition of the Chinese people to be "wholly inconsistent with the hypothesis of a very bad government, or a very vicious state of society."

CHAPTER IV.

RELIGION AND LITERATURE.

The religion of the early Chinese was in all probability Sabæism; but it seems unquestionable that, in very remote periods, they possessed a knowledge of some superior power beyond and above the material heavens. This power is supposed by some to have been merely the peculiar god of the sovereign, from whom alone he received ceremonial worship; but in later times, and up to the present day, the mystic *teen*, or overruling providence, could in like manner be addressed only by the emperor or deputies appointed by him. This is in perfect accordance with the patriarchal system. The head of the family was the high priest as well as king. He was the link of communication with the Deity, and the mediator between God and man. To interfere with this spiritual duty of the emperor was an usurpation of his authority, and was denounced as impious, and punished

like temporal rebellion; but the inferior objects of worship, such as the stars and the demons, which might influence but could not determine the destinies of man, might receive the services of meaner ministers, and to these was accorded a regular priesthood.

But the patriarchal system gave rise to another peculiarity, which may be said to be the grand distinguishing feature of Chinese religion. The head of the family, set apart by this intimate and special communion with heaven during his life, did not perish in the grave like ordinary mortals. He was transferred to a higher ministry above, and the domestic priest and king received worship from his descendants as a god. Men may be wicked or irreligious; they may neglect the temples, or —worst crime of all—plot against the emperor; but no Chinese is so desperately depraved as to omit the religious rites due to his ancestors. The displeasure of the manes, not the anger of Heaven, is the consideration which upholds innocence, and gives terror to remorse; and even the convert to another faith transplants, as it were, his household gods to the new heaven of his worship.

Heaven, Earth, and the Ancestors are the three great objects of adoration; and after them, held in greater or less esteem, are Confucius; the inventors of agriculture and silk; the spirits of heaven, and the gods of the earth; the god of the current year; the worthies of antiquity; the stars, clouds, rain, and winds; the five mountains upon which the ancients sacrificed; the ocean, rivers, hills, and streams; the high roads; the god of artillery; the god of the gate; the goddess of the soil; the north pole, or the north star; and the deities who preside over the protection of the frontiers. The spiritual dominion of the emperor extends over the whole of this secondary class, and he assigns rank or takes it away; and at the prayer

of his subjects grants a patent of canonization to those they delight to honour.

But the same etiquette, unless when regulated by special edicts, prevails in the spiritual and in the temporal world; and when a great mandarin lodges in a temple, he orders down those images which represent personages inferior to himself in rank. It would thus seem that the inferior gods of the Chinese are objects of respect more than of divine worship. With the genii of external nature they mingle the spirits of public benefactors; but above them all they place their own ancestors. The two former are certainly not higher than the catholic saints; and as for heaven and earth, they are the concern of the emperor, who alone has the right to adore them, or employ others to adore them in his stead.

What, then, is the religion of the Chinese? The worship of heaven is a court pageant, which the people neither understand nor affect to understand; while their ancestors, although the objects of devout respect, are certainly not deities, since they depend upon the pious sacrifices of their children for subsistence. As for the altars the more ignorant set up near the tablet of ancestors, with representations of genii, dragons, serpents, &c., these are merely the symbols adopted by the uninformed classes in all circumstances, to bring within their grasp the more poetical superstitions of their superiors.

We are frequently told of the Confucian religion: but such a religion has no existence,—there is no such thing. Confucius was a teacher of morals, not a promulgator of new creeds. He adopted the religion he found, because it was the existing religion,—the religion of his ancestors; but so far from boasting of any higher knowledge of the invisible world, he says as little about it as possible. He

advises men to pay the customary respect to gods, demons, and genii, but at the same time not to trouble themselves too much about them; and he throws out some hints that they themselves are merely spirits confined in a grosser element, and will one day mingle with the great soul of the universe. When asked by one of his disciples how he was to serve spiritual beings, he replied, "Not being able to serve men, how can you serve spirits?" And when questioned further about the dead, his answer was—"Not knowing the state of the living, how can you know anything about the dead?" Men, in fact, at least such of them as have attained to high distinction as sages, are placed above all inferior objects of worship, and next to heaven and earth, with which they form a triad of equally divided power. Confucius himself was of course one of these sages; and at this day, it is said, he has upwards of one thousand five-hundred and sixty temples, in which sixty-two thousand six hunded and six animals are immolated, and twenty-seven thousand six hundred pieces of silk presented every year to his manes at the expense of government, besides the countless oblations of private individuals.

The Chinese writings are not wanting in those sublime thoughts upon which even the rudest nations have stumbled, when groping in intellectual darkness after the Unknown God:—that Light which, whether a tradition of the early world or an innate idea, has been sought for in all ages, and in all parts of the heavens, either by the love or fear of mankind. But the religion, as actually practised, is merely a gorgeous ceremonial of sacrifices and oblations in honour of some idol or of the spirit it represents. These must be made either personally or vicariously by the emperor, and the people are mere spectators. The Roman Catholic superstition, though

nearly as exclusive, is protected and cherished by a hierarchy; but in China it is entirely an affair of the sovereign, and the people are left to attend to their grandfathers, and their little images of gilded clay. This is so far well, inasmuch as it renders intolerance and persecution unknown. When a rival sect is punished, it is for its political, not spiritual crimes; and, under ordinary circumstances, so far from government looking with any abhorrence upon other religions than its own, it does not scruple to perform its sacrifices either in a Taou or Buddhist temple, in those places in the provinces where it happens to have no convenient building of its own.

The sacrifices are splendid, but tedious from their sameness, except on some extraordinary occasions, when the emperor, in time of national calamity, goes to accuse himself before high Heaven of want of virtue or capacity, or when he or his empress has completed the great cycle of the Chinese,—sixty years. On the last occasion of the latter kind, which occurred in 1835, the empress mother is stated in the edict to be, "in virtue, the equal of the exalted and expansive heavens, and in goodness, of the vast and solid earth,"—the two great deities. "Looking upwards," it goes on, "and beholding her glory, we repeat our congratulations, and announce the event to heaven, to earth, to our ancestors, and to the patron gods of the empire;" and among the "great and special favours," to be shown in order to signalise the event, are presents to aged and noble families, monuments in honour of virtuous persons still living, and missions from the court to sacrifice at the tombs of the kings, in the temple of Confucius, to the five mountains and the four streams. From this it would appear that an oblation is a favour conferred upon the gods, just as a piece of money or silk is when conferred upon an old lady.

In addition to such spectacles, there are numerous public festivals, in which the people enjoy themselves as elsewhere, with little or no reflection upon the religious origin of the day. Among these is the ploughing of the sacred field by the emperor, which is both a pious and politic ceremony, commenced by prayers and sacrifices, and resulting eventually in a harvest which is devoted to the gods.

It is not surprising that, from the contempt and disgust inspired by a religion which consists merely of state ceremonies, the more intellectual of the Chinese, knowing nothing better, should have sought refuge even in the chilling dogmas of the Sadducee. This heresy commenced, as has already been stated, under the Sung dynasty, and is now the fashionable infidelity.

Next to state religion is Taouism, or demon worship par excellence. If we imagine the hermits and other ascetics of the earlier ages of Christianity bringing with them into the desert, together with their ignorant superstitions and fevered imaginations, the pure morality of the Gospel, we shall be able to form some idea of the disciples of Laou-tze. The national love of order had originated, from an early period, a classification of the spirits which haunt and infest the material world; and this philosopher, or more probably his disciples, is supposed to have been the first who systematised the whole, beginning with the doctrine of the divine *logos*. These spirits are said to have been originally men; but in the pantheism which runs through the whole of Chinese faith, it would be equally proper to say that men were originally these spirits. Some are lords and rulers of the upper world; some are genii and hobgoblins, wandering among groves and caverns; and some are demons of the abyss, whose business on earth is mischief, and whose

fate is hell and torment. Laou-tze gave himself out to be one of the genii who preside over the destinies of men; and he is still supposed by his worshippers to be engaged in this supreme office. His followers were retired and studious men. They were the high chemists of China, who supposed that the process of analysis would discover something more than physical elements; and, believing in the spiritual world, they invested with mystic qualities the world of matter, and devoted their lives to the search after the elixir of immortality, and the philosopher's stone. They were originally virtuous recluses, and by means of their ignorant experiments, acquired eventually some knowledge of medicine; but the body, as might be expected, was at all times vitiated by quacks and intriguers; and as their doctrines came but little home to the common business and bosoms of men, they could not make any permanent head against the more practical Confucians.

Like the state religionists, they worship idols representing the innumerable spirits which haunt the world; but their priests are not merely enthusiasts, but being without any general allowance, and depending solely upon the people, they work upon their fears as well as hopes, and by means of animal magnetism, and other mystic secrets, pass frequently for soothsayers and magicians.

At present they have a high priest who never dies, possessing the same kind of immortality as the Lama of Thibet; and who presides over deities and devils alike. He grants patents for worship, and defines the jurisdiction of the new gods; and, like his inferior clergy, derives a revenue from the sale of amulets to preserve men from the influence of the demons.

Buddhism is the same everywhere in its esoteric doc-

trines; but, from the circumstance of idol worship having been sanctioned by the first teacher, it is seen in a different external form wherever it has been introduced. In China, it is a Chinese idolatry, with countless simulacra, vast numbers of poor and indolent priests, and temples, monasteries, and nunneries, usually placed on the slope of some romantic hill, or in a recess of some shady grove, inviting the weary foot, by all "influences of soul and sense," to seek their enchanted repose. Buddhism, with its doctrine of love and peace, and dreamy quietism, is more especially the religion of women; but Taouism likewise has a charm for the impressible imagination of the sex, and, like the other, it has its colleges of female devotees. This fact, however, is sufficiently remarkable: since the Buddhists hold that women cannot enter into bliss till they have changed their sex; and the Taouists look upon marriage to be so improper and calamitous, that one of the most distinguished of the body supposed it to take place in consequence of some hate conceived in a former state of existence, whereby the parties are now unconsciously induced to seek each other in wedlock for the purpose of mutual torment.

Buddhism is said by some of the English missionaries to be humane only to animals, and to neglect the poverty and misery of men; but it likewise inculcates and practises a species of christianity which may be said to carry the virtue to extreme. The Chinese suppose the dead to be nourished by the sacrifices of the living; and therefore, when a whole family becomes extinct, and no descendants are left to administer to the wants of the manes, there is much cold, hunger, and distress in the spiritual world. To meet this exigency, the Buddhists, at a certain time of the year, hold a public entertainment

in every district, or every street, for the benefit of all such destitute ghosts as choose to avail themselves of the hospitality; and in the midst of flags flying, lanterns burning, and gongs and drums sounding, the unearthly guests are *seen* by some of the more privileged spectators hurrying from all points of the compass to the Feast of the Dead. When they rush up to the high table, their hair is standing on end, famine is on their thin wan cheeks, and hunger in their eager eyes; but on departing, laden with hogs and goats, baskets of fruit and pots of rice, it is easy to discern from their joyous looks that they have enough to last them till the next anniversary. It is true the bulk of the viands is never much diminished at such sacrifices, it being only the more ethereal part that can be consumed by the unworldly guests; but the spectators (or in other cases the descendants) do not scruple to eat what remains after the dead are satisfied.

Money also is so largely remitted by the Chinese to their ancestors, that the manufacture of the currency is a somewhat important branch of the national industry. It consists of bits of tin foil and gold leaf enclosed in paper about four inches square; and on being set fire to, this unsubstantial bullion passes through the smoke into the spectral hands that are waiting for it. Clothes, in like manner, are remitted by being merely painted with the pencil, and houses utensils and slaves, by being imitated in paper.

Upon the whole, the Chinese make no violent profession of faith in any religion. They leave it to the priests to argue for the honour of their peculiar worship, content to receive from them in return for their money such services as they require: for though an irreligious, they are an eminently superstitious people. Though immersed, however, in a lifeless and soulless idolatry,

it must not be supposed that they are destitute of the first groundwork of religion, of the foundation upon which rational faith might be built. They feel, without being taught, that there is a providence; they dread the judgments of offended heaven; and in swearing invoke its vengeance on their heads if they violate their oath.

The better informed classes of the Confucians, who reverence their ancestors, and permit the emperor to worship heaven and earth for his subjects—merely entertaining in their own hearts some indistinct impression of an overruling and retributive providence — look with equal contempt upon the heterodox sects and the superstitions of their own. A famous commentator asks, what need men have to go to worship on the hills, or address themselves to lifeless images, when they have already two living divinities in the house, their father and mother? An enlightened mind, he says, is the true temple of heaven, an ignorant one the seat of hell; and filial piety, in which is comprehended the whole series of social duties, is the one religion. As for the sect of Taou, they are only pill-makers, whose sole object is the preservation of the breath of life, and whose whole talk is of ghosts, devils, dragons, and monsters. Buddha, again, is a mere scoundrel, which is proved by his followers being unfilial, and in every other respect wicked. It is true, the superior men of both—those of the latter who reside in the pearl monasteries of the hills, and of the former who seek immortality in caves and hermitages—affect to reduce their doctrine, the one to the improvement of the heart, and the other to the renovation of the spirit. But of what use are these fanatics to the world, who forsake the obligations of life to sit cross legged, and muse silent and alone? Who has ever seen them, as

they pretend, ascend the western heaven, or take their flight upwards in broad day? It is all a farce: these ascetic priests of Buddha, these renovating doctors of Taou, are not worth the down of a feather to society. As for the Mahomedans, they are traitorous and worthless vagabonds; and as for the Christians, the best that can be said of them is, that they are good astronomers and mathematicians. This is why the government employs the latter to correct the calendar; but it is absurd to suppose that their science verifies their religion, which is as unsound and corrupt as the others—chatter-chattering about heaven and earth and things without either shadow or substance, which it is impossible for men to know anything about.

But notwithstanding this contempt of Christianity, it seems to have been merely owing to mismanagement that it is not at this moment one of the religions of China. There is a tradition that St. Thomas the Apostle founded a church in Pekin; but at all events the famous marble tablet discovered at Se-gnan-foo, although considered a forgery by La Croze, Voltaire, and others, is now supposed to be authentic evidence of the existence of the Syrian church in China from the middle of the seventh century. After the accession of the Mongol princes, the Nestorians flourished in the northern part of the country; but the Latin church coming now into the field, their quarrels so much weakened each other that the Mahomedans were able to expel them both. In 1553, St. Francis Xavier merely succeeded in reaching a soil which had long been the object of his spiritual yearnings, and where he landed but to die; and thirty years afterwards, his brethren of the Society of Jesus still exclaimed in transports of unavailing desire, as they looked towards this vast empire from Macao, " O rock! rock! when wilt thou open?"

The first of them who smote the mighty stone to any purpose was Matthew Ricci, a man of great talent and knowledge of the world, who made science the pioneer of religion. In 1601 he was taken into the service of the state, and died in ten years after, leaving thirty churches in Keang-nan province alone. He was greatly assisted by a Mandarin convert, who assumed the name of the Apostle of the Gentiles, Paul, and the daughter of the latter, Candida, who established a foundling hospital, which became practically a normal school of Christianity. After this, the progress of the missionaries was in general triumphant, though interrupted by fearful vicissitudes, till, towards the end of the Ming dynasty they were almost supreme in the palace. The Manchows, who succeeded, were as tolerant as their predecessors; and Adam Schaal, a German Jesuit, and, after him, Verbiest, became as famous and successful as Ricci himself.

The Jesuits, however, were not allowed to manage the work of conversion in their own way; for, attracted by their success various other orders, and more especially the Dominicans, crowded into the empire, and religious disputes commenced, of which the native infidels did not fail to take due advantage. The great questions were, what did the Chinese mean by heaven?—matter or spirit? and was the worship of Confucius and their ancestors a civil or religious ceremony? The Jesuits, wise in their generation, had interpreted literally, identifying the *tëen* with the Almighty, in virtue of its attributes of providence and omniscience, and suffering people to burn incense to whom they chose as a testimony of respect and reverence peculiar to the country. The Dominicans, on the other hand, who had known nothing of the difficulties which surrounded the infancy of Chinese Christianity, denounced this tolerant spirit as a compounding with the

evil one, and in 1645 procured a bull from Innocent X. adopting their decision. Only eleven years after Alexander VII. reversed this decree; and although in 1700 the emperor Kang-he declared that the latter pope was right,—that *tëen* meant the one true God, and that the customs of China were merely political,—Clement XI. reverted to the first opinion of the Dominicans, and thus pope and emperor went by the ears.

The consequences may be foreseen. Clement sent out a legate to forbid the Chinese Christians to worship their ancestors; and, after a great deal of recrimination, it was at length decided by the government that such Europeans as could assist in reforming the calendar might remain at court, but that the others were of no manner of use except in sowing dissensions among the people; and in 1723 the missionaries were driven from their place, three hundred churches destroyed, and three hundred thousand converts left in spiritual destitution. The church, notwithstanding, had taken root, and in spite of persecution, even to torture and death, which was continued up till 1820, the Romish Christians, chiefly under the charge of the French monks of the order of St. Lazarus, are now supposed to number upwards of two hundred thousand. The Protestants have as yet confined their endeavours to the distribution of books along the sea-coast; and the result not being in the mean time of any obvious importance, we must refer the reader to Mr. Medhurst's very interesting account of his own and other voyages. In 1845, an imperial edict was promulgated, legalising Christianity in China, which, although of little consequence in itself, will probably have the effect of drawing more labourers to the field.

The Confucian religion, as it is erroneously called, is so closely associated with the national literature, that

the classical or sacred books form the basis of all. It is said that in China, where there are at least two million literati, there is at this moment not one original writer! All are compilers, commentators, illustrators; and so little is anything like novelty appreciated, that when a translation of the New Testament was sent to the emperor, who had desired to see a work which had produced so much commotion, he merely remarked, as a circumstance quite conclusive of its merits, "It is not classical." The written language of their literature is said to be "a stupendous monument of human ingenuity, which can never be surpassed in its kind;" whereas the spoken language is poor and disjointed, and not merely unfit for the medium of eloquence, but inadequate for any but the most confined purposes of colloquial intercourse. When a Chinese wishes to speak upon an abstruse subject, he must have recourse to his tablets for assistance, the most valuable part of his language addressing itself to the eye not the ear, and being imprisoned, as it were, in those alphabetical signs which, among modern nations are merely representatives of sounds. It may well be supposed, therefore, that authors take infinite pains with the mechanical part of a language of such utility; and, in fact, even the caligraphy is considered so important, that a good writer must be a good penman. On a subject so extensive, and so little susceptible of popular interest, it may be sufficient to add here that the language is monosyllabic, and that the intervening lines, or, in the technical phrase of printers, "dashes," in the Chinese names in these pages divide words and not syllables.

The "five classics" and the "four books" have been frequently described, and some of them having received European translations, we are at little loss in deter-

mining the value of these fountains of Chinese literature. The first of the classics is a philosophical work ascribing the phenomena of the universe to some law of eternal moveability in matter; but although this law is explained in diagrams, in which the primary agents, heaven, earth, and man, are represented by lines susceptible of different combinations, and these of further combinations, and so on to infinity, it is not yet comprehended even in China. Confucius declared that if the mystery were ever penetrated the successful student would know all things: which is probably true. Another classic is a book of odes; a collection of national poems handed down from a remote period, and, in all probability, by oral tradition, to the time of Confucius, twenty-four centuries ago. They consist of popular songs, elegies, satires, and sacrificial hymns. The Chinese suppose, not unpoetically, that after the heart has endeavoured in vain to express itself, first by words and then by sighs, its emotions burst into song. The third is the book of rites, containing the ceremonial laws of China, already adverted to; the fourth, the celebrated Shoo-King, a history of the three first monarchs, and the fountain of all moral and political science; and the fifth an historical biography of Confucius himself, described by Gutzlaff as being nothing more than the most meagre of chronologies.

The "four books" are—a panegyric on the philosophical tenets of Confucius, by his grandson, explaining the dependence of politics upon morals, and the connection between the government of oneself, a family, and an empire; a treatise on human virtue; a collection of the remarkable sayings and actions of Confucius, by his disciples; and the book of Mencius, the most illustrious of his followers (who flourished two hundred years later),

intended chiefly to inculcate the great Confucian principle of philanthropical government.

On these nine works is based the whole system of Chinese literature. It has numerous histories, biographies, and memoirs; and a vast variety of philosophical treatises, chiefly in the form of dialogue, the whole of the notions of which are embodied in a single celebrated work published in 1420. The earlier poets appear to have been in general men of loose and irregular lives, who associated fervour of imagination with moral licentiousness, and whose finest ideas arose from the fumes of intoxication; but when at length the study of verse came to be considered an essential in scholarship, the afflatus subsided, and rhyme and reason intermarrying formed a very commonplace couple. To-day all China is poetical. The boy lisps in numbers, for the numbers come with the bamboo; the schoolmaster plasters his door-posts with his verses; and even in the kitchen the Chinese Apollo has his altars, where, like the hungry ghosts of the Taou, he is fed with the ethereal part of hashes and ragouts. The works of fiction, both in prose and verse, are a numerous, or rather an innumerable class. They are chiefly embellishments of history, although sometimes they exhibit a wild and unnatural extravagance, answering to that of the school which in Europe already desecrates the memory of Scott. "Many of the Chinese novels and romances," says Davis, "which were written in the fifteenth century of our era, and some much earlier than that date, would contrast very advantageously, either as literary compositions or as pictures of society, with their contemporaries of Europe." The list of dramatic works is abundant; and, if we may judge by one or two translated specimens, highly interesting; but the stage is deficient in the "getting-up," with the

exception of costumes, which are as splendid as in London. The government edicts form an important department in literature of themselves. They display all the beauties of Chinese composition, from the simply virtuous or affectionate to the stern and sublime; and in order that nothing inferior may be palmed upon the public, a collection adapted to every possible occasion is said to be kept ready for copying in the archives. There are many topographical works, and one collected by the present dynasty in two thousand volumes; but in other departments of science, medicine and botany are the only subjects that have received any illustration worth mentioning from native writers.

CHAPTER V.

SOCIETY AND MANNERS.

Before the first Tartar conquest, the population of China, according to the best accessible authorities, was about sixty millions; and although soon after it appeared to fall off by one-half, the difference should not be set down as actual loss by war or otherwise, but merely as belonging to portions of the country (more especially in the western and southern provinces) still remaining unsubdued, and therefore not included in the imperial census. However this may be, we find in 1753 the number estimated at upwards of a hundred millions; in 1792 at upwards of three hundred and seven millions; and in 1812 at upwards of three hundred and sixty-one millions. The prodigious fecundity of this race is perhaps one of the most important facts in the history of the world; for the Chinese are no longer confined to their own country, to be kept down to a certain limit by the Malthusian principle of population. They have acquired, under the

present government of meaningless and powerless edicts, habits of emigration; they have spread into Siam to the number of hundreds of thousands; they are gradually overflowing the Burman empire; they form the masses in British Malacca; they are the chief colonists of the Indian Archipelago. The new continent of Australia is in like manner open to this restless, rushing, bursting tide of population; which is in all probability destined, in subserviency to Great Britain, to construct a magnificent empire in the desert wastes of the ocean.

It needs hardly be remarked that the character and status of the Chinese, who number already so considerable a proportion of mankind, afford subjects of intense interest to the rest of the world, and more especially to the government and people of this country; and that it is therefore the more incumbent upon us, when endeavouring to see them as they really are, to disencumber our minds as far as possible from the prejudices of education, and endeavour, by dispassionate examination, to reconcile the conflicting testimonies of books.

The earlier missionaries beheld, at the eastern extremity of Asia, a civilization so nearly resembling in kind that of Europe, that they were filled with as much astonishment as admiration; and the Jesuits, more especially, may be expected to have reported favourably of a people whom they found so easy of conversion, and for whose souls' health they were so anxious in the main, as to pass over without too scrupulous examination such peccadilloes as their addiction to the worship of their grandfathers. Most of the pages of Du Halde and Grosier are filled with unqualified panegyrics; and after the more favourable authorities, the Abbé Raynal, has introduced into his history a philosophical romance, exhibiting China as a sort of Brobdignag Arcadia. On

the other hand, observers, whose knowledge was confined to the populace of seaport towns, express themselves as outraged by the dishonesty of a people who take every means in their power of obtaining more for their goods than they are worth; and some late Protestant missionaries, though upon the whole reasonable and well informed, look with pity, and frequently with contempt, upon that large portion of mankind to whom God has not thought fit to reveal himself in the human form.

As to the question of dishonesty, it may be said that Europeans are not very good judges. When they trade with some barbarous country—and they are themselves barbarians in the eyes of the Chinese—they do not inquire what their goods are worth but what they will fetch; they will exchange, if they can, a brass button for an ounce of gold, and have rarely been unwilling to shed human blood in order to keep up the market. With regard to the culpability of the Chinese in not having been favoured with a revelation, that is an affair between them and the Almighty. The true spirit of Christianity, if that were felt in Europe, would teach us to look with respect and affection upon this hitherto uncalled people, from the progress they have made in virtue unassisted by religion; for though, doubtless, deficient in many essential points, they are assuredly more humane, more peaceable, and more respectful to elders and superiors than any Christian nation in the world. When Mr. Medhurst coasted along the shores of China, with the praiseworthy object of scattering the good seed as he went, in the form of books written in that universal language which is understood by all classes throughout the empire, he found the inhabitants in a very different state from what might have been predicated of a pagan people. They were more interested, it is true, about the

dress of the strangers than about their doctrines ; but it was much that the wandering apostles could stroll through their quiet villages from house to house, and converse as freely as at home, receiving pleased looks and kind words in exchange for their beneficent intentions. On one occasion (and the scene was not uncommon) he landed at a small village enbosomed in trees, and was met at the entrance by a number of the inhabitants, to whom he distributed his publications, exhorting them to flee from the wrath to come. A woman was observed grinding millet with the assistance of a blind-folded ass, which she drove round a mill ; but on their approach, like the others of her sex, she walked modestly and sedately into her house. Through the hamlet ran a stream of clear sweet water, with a rude bridge thrown across, and here two schoolmasters (of that small solitary village) accepted gladly the books of the strangers, and another inhabitant presented them in return with a beautiful bunch of grapes. Beyond the houses there was seen a white tombstone, resembling those in an English churchyard, erected to the memory of a faithful wife by her sorrowing husband. "The pure whiteness of the monument," says Mr. Medhurst, "the affecting inscription, the adjacent village, the purling stream, and the silent evening, all conspired to awaken sensations of the most pleasing kind, and to enkindle anew the ardent longing that these peaceful villagers might be rendered still more happy by the religion of the gospel." This pious wish, though natural and commendable in itself, would have come with more effect in some other parts of the volume, as the good missionary must have been aware that there are not many parallels to such a scene to be found even in the Christian world.

In striving to account for the tranquil character of

Chinese society, modern writers have enlarged upon the long interval of peace the nation has enjoyed under the present dynasty, and have asserted that even the fact of their prodigious numbers requiring the people to be constantly at work in order to extort a subsistence from the soil, keeps them away from personal strife and political agitation. But the very same peculiarities observable to-day were evident at the earliest epochs of their national existence. The grand principles of filial piety and paternal duty were established as the basis of the government from the most ancient times; and sacrifices to the dead were offered up in the days of the pattern emperors, Yaou and Shun, the same as at present. The immolation of human victims was probably not unknown to the rude fathers of the race, and rare instances may be met with even in later times; but the humanity of the nation prompted them at a very early period to substitute effigies of straw. The same rigid ceremonial of society, even as regards visiting, indicated several thousand years ago the peaceful and methodical disposition of the people; and it is stated in native books of authority that "anciently every house had its study, every village its school, every district its college, and the empire its supreme establishments for learning."

But although the bases of the manners and character of the people were laid thus early, it must not be supposed that the superstructure was in China, any more than in the rest of the world, otherwise than a work of time. The ancient emperors are stated to have worn a robe of plain cloth in summer and of skins in winter; and the homely palace of Yaou was entered by steps of turf, and crowned with verdure growing from its roof of earth and straw. When we come to the third dynasty, we find red adopted as the court colour, and the officers

wearing a red collar to their robes. The prince's cap was of skin ornamented with precious stones; and wealthy people studded in the same manner the clasp of their silken girdles. The male dignitaries wore ear-rings, and the ladies sometimes made use of jewels for the same purpose, together with plates of gold in the hair. The walls of the houses were constructed of earth beaten down in a wooden frame; but the poor sheltered themselves in cabins made of planks; while in Western China the inhabitants had no houses at all in the fourteenth century before Christ, but dwelt in caves. Cities were enclosed with a ditch, the excavated earth of which furnished materials for the wall.

Under the Latter Han dynasty, the picture is very different. At this epoch we find wine paying a tax, and the courtiers vying with each other in the splendour of their dresses, equipages, and gardens. A minister of one of the princes reproaches him with the luxury of his court, and thus contrasts his habits with those of an ancestor who reigned one hundred and seventy-nine years before Christ:—"His nether garment," says he, "was of leather badly dressed; a common strap served to hold his sword; his arms were plain; his seat was a common mat; his apartment had no rich or handsome furniture; his only ornaments were his wisdom and his virtue. At the present day all is changed: your palace is a large city; in the interior your women are covered with diamonds, pearls, and other precious jewels; your horses are superbly harnessed; your dogs have rich collars; and even to the vessels of wood and clay all is covered with rich ornaments. You have cast bells of vast size, and your drums emulate the thunder; to say nothing of your dramas, concerts, and dances."*

* Thornton's History of China.

The courtiers appear to have imitated the luxury of their masters, for one of the emperors of this famous dynasty laments their extravagance in mansions, gardens, dresses, equipages, ornaments, slaves, women, and, more especially, in sepulchres and mausoleums. In the good old times the bodies, even of the emperors, were committed to the earth wrapped up in their dresses, and the grave covered with loose wood; but at this modern epoch—long before the birth of our Saviour—one of the imperial tombs, constructed of stone, rose like a mountain, five hundred feet high and half a league in circumference. The interior formed an immense saloon, in the middle of which was the bier, surrounded by lamps and flambeaux fed with human fat; while on one side was a tank of water in which swam birds of gold and silver, and on the other a magnificent collection of furniture, arms, and jewels.

The grandeur of the emperors and the nobles was now likewise displayed in the number of their women, eunuchs, and slaves. Up to this date there were only state slaves, consisting of criminals, and perhaps prisoners of war; but one of the Han princes, in all probability from motives of humanity, permitted the lower orders to sell themselves and their children for a subsistence. Numerous humane enactments were now made by successive princes to mitigate the fate of such unfortunates, till at length slavery became what it now is, in the words of Sir George Staunton, "a mild species of servitude," from which the individual may escape by purchasing his liberty.

With regard to the employment of eunuchs in offices of state, Montesquieu supposes it to have originated in the policy of the sovereigns, who dreaded the transmission of power in great families. In China, however,

hereditary office was altogether unknown, except in the imperial house, and this insulated people were too ignorant of the rest of the world to be able to receive warning from the lessons of history. It is more probable that the class of persons alluded to owed a distinction so fatal to themselves and the government to the weakness and vices of their patrons, who were brought up in the women's apartments under their tutelage, and to whom they became indispensable ministers in the enervating pleasures of the palace.

The luxury we have described does not appear to have been originally confined by law to the grandees of office, but to have pervaded to some considerable extent the whole nation. But as the theory of the government came to be more developed, the distinctions of classes were more and more necessary, and under successive dynasties the decrees of the Board of Rites acted practically as sumptuary laws. Their operation was facilitated by the increasing numbers and the consequently diminishing means of the people. Wealth became every year more difficult of acquisition; and at length the bulk of the population were only too happy to be able to procure a sufficiency of food. Under these circumstances, a scale of luxury was gradually formed, embracing all the gradations of society. The houses of the mandarins, for instance, must correspond with their rank, and an additional gate or window would no more be permitted than an ornament on the dress appertaining to a higher office than the individual possesses. This is productive of a remarkable uniformity throughout the empire, for the shape as well as size of the buildings is matter of prescription; and if a man were to gratify his taste by the erection of a house on a new principle of architecture, it would be pulled down as an impertinent innovation, and

the superfluous means of which he made so ridiculous a use would be diverted into the public treasury. In China, accumulations of wealth are illegal. Every man is expected to be the architect of his own fortune, and to spend his income as he gets it, without offence to his superiors or to the emperor. An individual, therefore, unemployed by government, must not have a better house than a mandarin, nor a lower mandarin presume to lodge himself like a higher; and, indeed, the erection of costly fabrics by private persons would be absurd in a country where, at the father's death, the children are left to struggle for their own place in society.

Considered in one point of view, this arrangement is advantageous, inasmuch as it saves the Chinese from the hypocrisy and ostentation of Europe, where every family strives to appear higher than it is, and where genteel Poverty must wear a good coat if he should have to endure for that purpose a hungry stomach. But, on the other hand, it gives rise to evils that are still worse, for a Chinese, terrified to appear rich, spends his money in those sensual enjoyments which do not offend the eye of authority In no other country is the luxury of the table carried to such an extent, and pleasures of a different, and some of a horrible kind are here followed either under the sanction or with the tacit permission of the laws.

Except in towns, the houses are usually only of one story, and consist of the dwelling of the family and minor buildings, surrounded by a brick or stone wall, without any external aperture but the gate, the windows all looking into an inner court. At the entrance are occasionally flower-pots, and sometimes artificial rocks, mountains in miniature, and gardens; while in houses of any distinction large lanterns are hung at the gate in-

scribed with the name and titles of the inhabitant. The extent of the space enclosed by the wall denotes the rank of the party to whom the mansion belongs; and this is laid out, according to the area, in additional courts, furnished with ornamental tanks filled with gold fish and planted with the sacred lotus, banks of flowers or artificial rocks surmounted with shrubs, and walks paved with figured tiles. The tiles are a sort of coarse porcelain, and are lavishly used in grotto work in these inner courts; while ornaments of stucco, in which animals, flowers, and fruits, skilfully imitated and sometimes coloured after nature, are common because they are cheap. The Chinese are also very ingenious both in making bricks and in their arrangement in building, disposing them in squares, circles, triangles, and other figures, which give a neat and finished appearance to the wall. When the house has two stories the upper is inhabited by the women, who are always placed in the most secluded part of the dwelling; and among the better classes it has a gallery or verandah neatly painted and enclosed with a railing. It is only in towns, however, that these comparatively lofty dwellings are common, where the lower story requires to be given up to the shop, and where the space is too valuable to admit of many buildings in the rear. It is surprising that the Chinese, who are such economists of room, and who are fond of huddling themselves together in towns, should not have hit upon the expedient, so common in Europe, of living above one another in successive stories; but so far from this being the case, nothing strikes them as more odd in the descriptions they receive of our cities than this peculiarity.

On ascending from the dwellings of the respectable or wealthy classes to that of the emperor, we find ourselves

beyond the reach of sumptuary laws, and behold a scene which has no parallel in the rest of the world. The imperial residence at Pekin is about two miles in circumference, surrounded by a wall thirty feet high and twelve broad, built of red brick, and further defended by a moat lined with hewn stone. "There reigns," says Father Hyacinth, "among the buildings of the Forbidden City, a perfect symmetry both in the form and height of the several edifices, and in their relative positions, indicating that they were built upon a regular and harmonious plan." Entering by the southern gate, the visitor finds himself in a large court, adorned with bridges, balustrades, pillars, and steps, with figures of lions and other sculptures, all in fine marble. In front is a building of white marble, one hundred and ten feet high, where the emperor receives the congratulations of his officers on New Year's day and on the anniversary of his birth. Two more halls must be passed through before the peculiar dwelling of this earthly god is reached, which, according to the Russian traveller Timkowski, is "the loftiest, richest, and most magnificent of all the palaces." "In the court before it," he says, "is a tower of gilt copper, adorned with a great number of figures, which are beautifully executed. On each side of the tower is a large vessel, in which incense is burned day and night." Further on, the imperial flower-garden is adorned with pavilions, temples, grottos, sheets of water, and artificial rocks; and in this direction the buildings are terminated by a noble library, and the northern gate beyond of the Forbidden City. On the east of the line thus indicated stand the council-chamber and other palaces, with a temple containing the ancestral tablets of the reigning family; and on the west the hall of pictures, the imperial printing-office, the principal magazine of the crown, and the female apartments.

It needs hardly be said that these "golden walls and pearly palaces," as the Chinese style them, are very unlike those that captivate the imagination or gratify the taste in Europe. Their thousand columns, with neither base nor capital as in Greek architecture; their scolloped roofs and projecting eaves, their leaf-shaped windows, circular doors, and fantastic emblems, are rather grotesque than elegant when viewed in detail; but still the brilliant colours and splendid gilding of the interior, the varnished tiles of bright yellow that, under a meridian sun, gleam like burnished gold, and, more than all, the vast extent of the area thus studded with palaces, courts and sculptures, give no inadequate idea, when combined, of the dwelling of the Dragon King.

In the other extreme of society, the poor live in such huts as local circumstances permit. Some are constructed of mud, and some of solid rock; some are mere tents of kajan leaves, and some sheds composed of rough planks. They usually consist of one unpaved room, which is shared with the family by pigs, goats, and asses; and the same economy of space is exhibited in higher circles, where human beings are crowded together with a stifling closeness. Twenty square feet, we are told, suffice for a dozen people to eat, trade, and sleep in; while most of the streets in the towns and cities are so narrow that it is possible for a passer-by, by extending his arms, to touch at the same time the houses on both sides. The villages, in general, are grouped at the fancy of the inhabitants, and have neither street nor lane.

The furniture, even of the best houses, is more scanty than in England, and consists of lackered and polished chairs, tables, painted screens, a couch, and spittoons. The ornaments are vases and jars of porcelain, a few pictures, inscriptions in beautiful penmanship, and painted lanterns of silk, varnish, horn, paper, and some of

glass, hanging from the roof. The Chinese do not value lanterns for the light they give so much as for their beauty and ingenuity; and instead of striving to increase their utility, they retain the primitive cotton wick in its cup of oil, and exhaust their imagination in constructing figures of all kinds, which are set in motion by a horizontal wheel at the top, revolving by means of the draft of air, on the principle of the English smoke-jack.

The great majority of the Chinese are said to be dressed beneath their means, from the fear of attracting the cupidity of the mandarins by any exhibition of wealth. A peasant, however (and the bulk of the nation are peasants), can hardly, one would think, have much room for extravagance, since his clothing consists merely of a pair of trousers fastened round his waist, and a smock-frock hanging over them, the latter of which is altogether thrown off in warm weather. These garments are made of cotton, and their paucity accounts for the remark of Barrow that an acre of that plant will clothe several hundred persons. Wool they could not afford, as the pastures requisite to supply so populous a nation would encroach too much upon the land on which they raise their food; whereas, cotton may be planted between the rice crops, and thus relieve rather than exhaust the soil. Their hat in winter is of felt, but in summer it is made of interlaced cane, with brims broad enough to serve for an umbrella; and in rainy weather they wear capes or short cloaks woven of flags or reeds.

The cap is said to be the great distinction between the summer and winter dress of the other portions of the population; but it is only so because it serves as a signal for the general change. Among this ceremonious people no one is to presume to find the weather cold before his superiors; and until it is notified in the gazette that the

great man of the province has assumed his winter cap of black velvet or fur, with the brim turning up round the crown like a saucer holding an inverted cup, the inhabitants must continue to wear their cone of bamboo filaments. A button or knob at the top of either—red, blue, white, or gilded—distinguishes the rank of the individual, and a bunch of crimson silk or horsehair hangs down all round from the ornament. In summer, the nether garment resembles Dutch breeches, and over this in winter are drawn tight leggings, which leave a bustle behind that might awaken the envy of a European belle. Above this in the former season is a wide gown of light silk, gauze, or linen; exchanged in the latter for a longer one of silk or crape reaching to the ankles, and over all a loose tunic with wide sleeves of fur, silk, or broadcloth, lined with skins, and descending to the hips. The girdle, of strong wrought silk, contains the indispensable fan-case, tobacco-pouch, flint and steel, and sometimes a sheath with a small knife and a pair of chop-sticks. Some carry a watch in an embroidered case, and many a snuff-bottle, with a minute spoon for taking out the powder. All who can afford them wear stockings of cotton or silk; and the whole of the classes above the peasantry clumsy thick-soled shoes, boots being forbidden to persons under a certain rank. The furs and skins that serve to vary the material of the winter garments are sometimes, among the lower classes, those of dogs, cats, and even rats and mice; but Davis mentions likewise one of an exquisitely delicate description, which could hardly be thought of by any but a luxurious and effeminate people—the skin of the lamb *in utero.*

The dress of the women is a slight modification of that of the men, but their trousers are carefully fastened at the ankle, so as to display their small feet. They wear

no covering on the head till, after attaining a certain age, they substitute a silk wrapper for the ornaments which have till then formed their only coiffure. These ornaments are flowers, jewels, gold and silver bodkins, small birds made of gold leaf and pearls, or the Chinese phœnix fashioned of gold and jewels, and fixed on an elastic spring with its beak stooping over the forehead, and its wings quivering above the temples. The hair appears to be the last stronghold of female liberty. They all wear their petticoats according to law or custom, but every woman claims a right to the absolute disposal of her tresses. Sometimes they are twisted into bows and crests, sometimes gathered up behind into a knot, but the poorest peasant in general adorns it with artificial flowers, or, as the last resource of poverty, at least a sprig of myrtle; and occasionally they assist the effect by binding a fillet of black silk round their foreheads, to set off their pale complexions.

And the hair is worthy of this attention, for it is as black as jet, of great length, and singular beauty. That of the men is stronger and coarser, which is of the less consequence as they shave it away from the fore part of the head and plait it behind into a tail. A Chinese Adonis is the beau ideal of a London alderman, with a mighty corporation, and large fat pendulous ears; while the Venus of the far east has a broad and very pale face, sleepy and languishing eyes, a taper waist, and the gait of a cripple. It is true the waist is not one of her ostensible charms, for she would consider it grossly immodest to exhibit in public the form of her person; but the lover, for all that, pleases his fancy with the idea; and the match-maker (for Hymen here, as among the Greeks, has a go-between) dwells poetically upon the perfection. Even the face, unluckily, is too much left to the

imagination ; for it is customary to daub the lips and cheeks with white and red paint, while the eyebrows are drilled into a slender curve, intended to represent the faint edge of the new moon. By a more barbarous artifice, the feet are compressed in infancy by means of ligatures round the instep and toes, the latter being bent downwards till they grow into the sole. This costs about six years of almost unintermitting tears and screams; and the fortunate result is a hobbling gait, and a club-foot from three to four inches long and as many in circumference.

While the Chinese of the better orders, however, pay so much attention to external appearance, they forget almost altogether personal cleanliness. White linen or cotton next the skin is seldom thought of, and in winter the under garments are not changed at all. They use neither sheets nor tablecloths; and they do not bathe habitually, as the nations of the west did before that first of civilized luxuries made its appearance in Europe—a clean shirt. The consequence is that vermin and cutaneous diseases abound, and are no more objects of shame than if they were unavoidable evils.

If this be a proof that they have not attained to quite so high a point of civilization as has sometimes been accorded to them, the endless ceremonies which clog their intercourse furnish a still stronger one. There is always less ceremony at the two social extremes of ignorance and refinement than in the transition state, where everything men do is overdone. The Chinese are not so far on as the noblemen in Gil Blas, who called each other by their surnames: they are still the parvenus (in spite of their hoary antiquity) to whom it was necessary to give their titles in full. This over-breeding, however, is in one remarkable respect different from the vulgarity of

Europe, for it has an entire consistency which the latter wants. It is not vanity in disguise. It is not awkward assumption repressed by self-suspected inferiority. It is merely an overstrained, and, therefore, vulgar politeness, founded on the true principle of *giving way*.

When a Chinese invites another to his house, he does not simply "request the honour," but begs it as a favour and a condescension. Even after the invitation has been accepted, he despatches a messenger to remind the expected guest of his promise and to entreat that it may be fulfilled. When the latter at length makes his appearance, the host meets him either at the door or outside the house, according to his rank, and conducts him, with much apparent respect, and a multitude of profound bows, to the dining-room. He inquires after his health and his affairs, sympathizing in his griefs, and expressing delight at his good fortune. If the guest be a stranger, he is his "venerable uncle," "honourable brother," or "virtuous companion," for the personal pronoun would be unpolite; while the entertainer himself is "the worthless fellow," "the late born," or "the stupid one." If his friend's son comes in question he is "the honourable young gentleman," and his daughter "the thousand pieces of gold;" while he can find no better words for his own offspring than "the dog's son," and "the female slave." All this time the overwhelmed guest struggles against the honours that are thrust upon him. He will bow lower and oftener if it be possible; and at the contrasted terms of exaltation and abasement, exclaims with Hamlet, "Sir, my good friend, I'll change that name with you!"

But the company have all assembled, and a simultaneous rush is made at the table. It is a struggle for precedence, and is carried on with heat and clamour;

though the place which is the object of contention is not the seat of honour but the lowest and humblest at the board. The uplifted chopsticks of the host at length give the signal for the onslaught, and a prolonged repast is commenced, which, although deficient in the huge masses of flesh (not unfrequently red with blood) so dear to the English, includes innumerable dishes—all served in porcelain saucers—that would do honour to the most recherché table in Paris. The guests drink to each other, rising up ceremoniously with the brimming cup held in both hands, and general toasts are in like manner despatched in quick succession; till at length even the weak rice wine, or rather beer, does its office, the veil of conventional etiquette is rent away, and Nature presenting herself among the group of Confucian automata, makes the whole table kin.

The ladies, in the mean time—where are they? Where the English ladies are at a Literary Fund or other similar dinner; or at least where such of them are as have sufficient meanness of spirit to gaze from a gallery at the male animals feeding, and thus exhibit themselves both as witnesses and exemplars of the very leisurely rise of the nation from barbarism. In China, the females of the family, and the guests of their own sex they invite, are glad, in the paucity of social amusements, to look on from a latticed gallery at a great dinner; and this involves no loss either of self-respect or of the respect of the company, since the national notions of womanly modesty set their appearance at the table entirely out of the question. The position of women in society might be supposed to determine the question as to the exact point of civilization reached by the people; but it would be manifestly absurd to try the Chinese by a European standard. All that can be said is, that in their treatment of the sex they are

by far the most refined people of Asia. In the novels and romances with which their literature abounds, love is the primum mobile, as with us; and in some of them that are known in Europe the heroines are endowed, not only with physical beauty, but likewise with true nobility of mind. It is to these works, however ancient, we must look for a picture of Chinese society. In Europe the early fabliaux can only be used for a similar purpose by the aid of the commentaries of the learned; but in China the genius of the people delights in details, and each of their fictions is a microcosm of manners.

While the national taste and feeling, however, of the Chinese lead them to respect the sex, their punctilious adhesion to ancient prescription places women in a legal position much lower than they would occupy if forms and customs had changed, as elsewhere, with the moral advancement of the nation. It appears to us, from the few translations that exist, as if a struggle were going on between law and feeling, between form and sentiment. The heroine takes her own part against legal injustice, and is followed by the sympathy of the reader; and when all is unavailing, like her sister phantoms of the west, she knows how to die. In one of these fictions, the beauty of a damsel of low degree is represented as the cause of a contest between the two emperors of China and Tartary. The latter is successful; and returning homewards with his unwilling prize, he reaches the river Amoor, the boundary between the two territories. On learning here that she is about to leave for ever the land of her lover, and enter the dominions of the desert king, the captive takes a cup of wine, pours a libation towards the south—her last farewell—and suddenly plunges into the river.

This, however, is romance; and it exhibits a purity

and nobleness of sentiment which no more belongs to the feminine character in China than anywhere else. It is a proof of Dr. Wigan's theory of the duality of the mind, in which the cerebrum is represented as a double organ of separate and conflicting authority, one part occasionally imagining the great, while the other reduces to practice the mean. The latter "hemisphere of the brain" is in full operation with the ordinary Chinese, a people kept down, perhaps more than any other, by the stern necessities of animal life. Unlike the Hindoos, they are subjected to the changing rigour of heat and cold, and require food and clothing accordingly; while their prodigious numbers, even in proportion to the vast area of the soil from which they draw their subsistence, render it a difficult matter even to live. Among such a people female children are a curse rather than a blessing; and children of one sex or other they must have, since a man dying without descendants would leave his hungry manes to depend upon the piety of strangers. These, it may be said, are only the necessities and superstitions of the poor and the ignorant; but all the Chinese were at one time poor and ignorant, and it is no wonder that in spite of the poets and romancers, there should be found intermingled, even with the refinements of society, much stronger notions of the natural inferiority of women than now exist in Europe.

The Catholic missionaries asserted, and the Protestant missionaries believe, that the dislike to having female children has given rise to a national practice of infanticide. Bridgman and Gutzlaff declare that they know the fact of their own knowledge; while Ellis, De Guignes, Davis, and others merely tender the negative evidence that they never witnessed such a thing. In the mean time, it is well known that foundling hospitals flourish

nowhere so well as in China; that the Bhuddists and Catholics find no difficulty in obtaining female infants for their nunneries, or to bring up as wives for their converts; and that the law not only positively permits the sale of children for a subsistence, but virtually gives the parent the power of life and death. With such outlets for the proscribed sex, one would think there was no need of resorting to murder; and yet it is equally obvious from the same facts that in cases of difficulty a Chinese parent could not be withheld by sensibilities as keen as those of other civilized nations. We believe, therefore, that infanticide, although not a national practice, is a more common crime than in Europe; and that it proceeds from a mistaken idea of mercy in bosoms where the parental instincts are not strong enough to combat it.

Gutzlaff informs us that it is a "well-known fact that the male population is much larger than the female," and gravely accounts for the balance by infanticide; adding, that the government connive at the practice as an effectual check upon the too rapid increase of the people. Like many other well-known facts, however, this one seems very doubtful. The universal custom of marrying, and marrying early; the circumstance of so many of those who can afford the expense having legal concubines as well a sa wife; the unfrequent remarriage of widows; the nunneries of the Buddhists; the great numbers of women educated expressly for immoral purposes;—all concur in indicating that the female preponderates over the male population, as in most other countries. As for the government desiring to keep down the too rapid increase of the people, the very reverse is stated by every other writer. Among the extraordinary anomalies catalogued by Lord Brougham, as exhibited by the Chinese, is their "suffering perpetually from the population encroach-

ing upon the means of subsistence, and yet systematically stimulating the increase of its numbers, removing every check which might mitigate the evil, and closing every outlet for the redundancy."

Women act more specifically than elsewhere as a bond of union among the population; and indeed, were it not for a peculiarity we are about to mention in the institution of marriage, the Chinese might be found at this day, not a mighty nation under a single head, but a congèries of such patriarchal tribes as their ancestors formed when feeding their flocks on the heights of the Himalaya. These original tribes may have become fused and lost in process of time, but the system still exists. In feudal China there is said to have been about one thousand seven hundred and seventy great names or families, but this number has now diminished to between four and five hundred; and all these form true *clans*, answering to those of the Scottish Highlanders, but without the distinctive element of feudality. All the individuals of a clan have the same surname, and they are all supposed to stand in blood relationship to each other. They defend each other from oppression, they relieve each other in poverty, and sometimes a single clan is powerful enough to protect one of its members from the government itself. Thus a spirit of general nepotism is engendered; thus jealousies and contentions on a great scale are introduced; and thus, in the ruder parts of the country, even private wars are not uncommon. But in the midst of this universal spirit of disunion, a bond of adamant connects the apparently severed classes of the people. The clansmen cannot marry among their own name. All must take wives from another tribe than their own, and thus intermingle the affections, the interests, and the blood of the whole race. The efforts of government to

break up the system have ever been vain; and for this reason that it is part and parcel of the Chinese constitution, being inseparably associated with the principles on which the monarchy is founded.

Marriages are rarely brought about from mutual inclination except in romances; and indeed, among the genteeler classes, men have no opportunity of becoming intimately enough acquainted with ladies to admire them otherwise than as objects of sense. The Tartar emperor who has been mentioned as the rival of him of China fell in love with the damsel's *picture;* and in like manner in ordinary life—when it happens that the nuptials have not been arranged by the parents when as yet the parties were in their cradles—the wooer is stimulated by the graphic descriptions of the go-between. Sometimes a prudent father buys a female child and educates her as the future spouse of his son; for wives, even if come by in the regular way, cost money in China, to an amount depending upon beauty and family; and no man remains a bachelor after twenty who can afford any sum from five to five thousand dollars. The only portion of the bride is her trousseau, which, together with the lady herself, is sent to the house of her intended, accompanied by bridesmen and maids, with music playing and flags flying. When the sedan is opened, he sees her, perhaps for the first time, and is at liberty, if he repent his bargain, to send her instantly back; but should she once alight at his threshold, it is an *affaire finie*, and he must take her for better for worse. The marriage ceremony consists in the young couple sharing together a cup of wine; but after the honeymoon, the bride returns to her father's house to perform once more for some weeks, and for the last time, the duties of a daughter. Divorce is easily obtained by the husband; and if his wife prove to be barren he is at

liberty to take a concubine—a privilege which the mandarins enjoy without restriction as to motive, and which is very liberally construed by the rich of all classes. Infidelity on the part of the wife, however, is almost wholly unknown; a fact which is admitted even by the missionaries.

The peace of Abram's household was disturbed by the jealousies of Sarai and Hagar, but this does not seem to occur very frequently in China, where every one has his own place assigned to him both by law and custom. The inferior wife acts as a servant, and is sometimes sent away when the purpose for which she was introduced into the family is accomplished; but it is not improbable that the mistress, who does not eat with her husband, and who has no balls, concerts, or other parties, and no loves or gallantries to wile away the time, looks upon the appearance of the stranger as a relief. Weaving, sewing, embroidery, and household work, are the accomplishments of the lower classes, to which reading, writing, and verse-making are added in the higher circles. The stream of life runs sluggishly with woman in China—but it runs long. She may be condemned—

> "To waste long days that might be better spent,"

but not—

> "To weep long nights in pensive discontent,
> To speed to-day, to be put back to-morrow,
> To feed on hope, to pine with fear and sorrow,
> To fret her soul with crosses and with cares,
> To eat her heart through comfortless despairs;"—

in short, she is, in a great measure, exempted from what European ladies call their "trials;" and the consequence is that she lives to a good old age, and so sound in constitution that in general she does not leave off child-bearing till she has reached fifty years.

The lives of the men are comparatively as equable.

The prescribed politeness or kindness of their manner gives its tone to their mind; for the habit of caring for the feelings of other persons renders our own more agreeable or more tolerable. Their intellectual studies are little more than exercises of the memory. If many of the nobler ingredients are wanting in their cup of life, so are many of the bitterest; and in general, therefore, they drain it to the dregs with a cheerful countenance. If secluded from those loftier pursuits which so often give sternness to the brow of age, the old men can at least fly kites, and make them fight, too, in the air; and even when at home and alone, when books have become tedious and fortune has been unkind, they have always the resource of swinging themselves for hours together in a cot suspended from the roof, and screaming their inharmonious songs.

It is no wonder that in a state of society where sumptuous furniture, and the other elegancies of life indispensable to wealthy Europeans, are illegal, men should fly to the indulgences of the table. But among the lower classes almost everything is eaten that has either animal or vegetable life; and even in the mineral kingdom, gypsum is largely used as one of the ingredients of a jelly. Cats, dogs, asses, rats, mice, frogs, worms,—all things that an English beggar would turn from with loathing and horror, are freely eaten by the Chinese; although the sweet potato in the south, and millet in the north, with rice throughout the whole kingdom, constitute the principal food of the masses. Pork and salted fish are sometimes accessible to the poor; but all classes, whatever they eat, are partial to that flavour of antiquity in the dish which an English gourmand would usually confine to venison. The very poorest Chinese is no niggard. Eating with him is a social enjoyment, which

relaxes his brow and opens his hand; and he will rarely allow even a stranger to pass by without inviting him to a share of his scanty meal.

The principal feasting time is the New Year, the grand holiday of the Chinese. On that occasion all the world exchanges bows, visits, compliments, presents of eatables and articles of dress. It is also the season for the settling of accounts, even if money should have to be borrowed for the emergency; for the dirtiest to sweep their floors and wash their persons; for the very atheist to present himself at the temple; and for all to clothe their faces with smiles and their limbs with new garments. China sits up to see the new year come in; she resolves to be kind and happy during its continuance; she forgives God Almighty for the past.

There is another great time for feasting; when the house is illuminated, and tables are spread out with every delicacy the family can afford. In another room is the coffin, it may be of the late master, with incense wreathing up from an altar by its side. During the whole time it is kept in the house—and this is sometimes for months—the son sleeps upon a coarse mat near it. It is here, dressed in white sackcloth, with dishevelled hair, and with a cord round his waist, he receives the condolence of his friends; while the women behind a screen fill the air with their lamentations. An establishment for the dead, in the mean time, of houses, gardens, furniture, &c., cut out in paper, together with large quantities of equally unsubstantial coin, are burnt for his use to the sound of music and crackers. The coffin is at length deposited in the earth, food sacrificed to the manes, and a stone, if not a mausoleum, erected on the spot. In respectable houses, the tablet of the deceased is hung up in the Hall of Ancestors, a room

consecrated to the memory of the dead; whither in spring and autumn the surviving descendants repair to perform their devotions, proceeding afterwards in a body to the grave to offer victuals, candles, flowers, and incense.

In this slight sketch it will be seen that we have not attempted to go into details (which will be found both full and entertaining in Davis), but have merely selected from various authors such salient points as appeared likely to lead to a correct estimate of the character of the people.* If we have executed this task as we intended, the reader will be able to draw the corollary for himself. He has seen a mixture of good and bad, of greatness and meanness, of sound sense and frivolity: but all that he would have seen, though possibly not to the same degree, in an examination of any other country in the world. The risk is that he will try those characteristics by a European standard, and thus utterly fail in his object. Some writers laud the Chinese as paragons of virtue because they revere their parents; and some stigmatise them as semi-barbarians (a favourite term of the Protestant missionaries), because they burn incense to their ancestors. They are neither one nor other. Many, again, compare their position with that of Europeans a certain number of centuries ago: but nothing can be more hopelessly erroneous. The progress of Chinese civilization, and the circumstances that acted upon it, have been wholly different from those of the western world, and it would be vain to look for a similarity at any epoch whatever.

* In some cases we have considered Gutzlaff a better authority than Davis, in so far as superficial facts are concerned; the former having resided long in the interior, where he became a naturalized citizen of the empire, and was received as a member into one of the clans, while the latter, though a more careful thinker, appears more frequently to have drawn his information from books.

The ignorance of Europe was characterized by a brutality which is entirely unknown in China; and, besides this, it was ignorance of a totally different kind. The great mass of Europeans were ignorant of literature and science as they existed in their own day; while the great mass of the Chinese are well instructed in all the knowledge, imperfect as it may be, of their time. In Europe the lower classes could neither read nor write, and a large proportion of the upper classes were in the same predicament; while education, to that extent at least, was—*and is*—more general in China than in any other country in the world, with the sole exception of Japan. As yet our acquaintance with the Chinese is pretty nearly confined to the rabble of a great city, the outpost of the country in what may be termed its defence against the advance of the western nations. This rabble has been brought up from the cradle in hatred and contempt of Europeans, who were excluded, by authority, from the benefit of the ceremonial law. All the arts and all the power of the government have been employed in erecting a moral barrier against us. The Centre of the world was aware that it had been subdued by a handful of Tartars; and it had heard that the British, the richest and most clamorous of those foreign barbarians who repaired to the gates of Canton to sue for permission to trade, had, under the very same pretexts, overrun the Mogul empire. It was necessary, therefore, to exclude the whole European race from the Flowery Land; but in the mode of doing so a strange peculiarity of Chinese ignorance betrayed itself. The government resolved that it would not discover the strangers to be anything else than paltry and ignorant barbarians; and, like the bird which, when pursued, hides its head in the sand, fancied itself secure so long as the blindness continued!

If, in referring to earlier Europe, we suppose that the imperfect knowledge, and the comparative refinement and tranquillity of character enclosed in the convents was generally diffused throughout society, we may facilitate by that means our conception of the moral position at present held by the Chinese; but in no other way can the comparison serve any other purpose than to bewilder and mislead.

BOOK VIII.

THE CHINESE EMPIRE — ITS INTERNAL RESOURCES AND FOREIGN RELATIONS.—THE EMPIRE OF JAPAN.

CHAPTER I.

PRODUCTIONS AND RESOURCES OF CHINA.

If we consider that the Chinese empire contains one-third part of the human race, living in a high state of civilization, and yet almost wholly independent of foreign commerce, we must conclude that the country in its productions and resources is one of the most admirable in the world. But, at the same time, it should not be forgotten that the people are wonderfully parsimonious in their use of the means of subsistence, and that they accept without repugnance as food many of the gifts of nature, which elsewhere excite only curiosity or disgust. It may be a question whether the appetite that rejects with loathing the flesh of a cat or a rat, and luxuriates on that of other animals infinitely more uncleanly in their habits, is not guided more by prejudice than reason; but still this philosophical taste of the Chinese, when taken

in conjunction with their general *preference* for the flavour which attends decomposition and decay, would seem to indicate some peculiarity in their organization. At any rate the fact is important, as extending to its utmost limit of elasticity the line with which nature confines the movement of population; and it will account for that outburst of colonization, in defiance of the laws of the empire, which has been already pointed out as so well calculated to excite interest and expectation.

In a country so well cleared as China, the larger carnivorous quadrupeds are, of course, not common; but the Bengal tiger still exists in the forests of the south-west, and its gall and bones are said to be used by military officers as a medicine for inspiring courage. Panthers and bears—the paws of the latter affording a luxury for the table—are occasionally found, and deer are common to the north of the Great Wall. The wild ass haunts the cold and dreary wastes towards the Russian frontier, and presents the same solitary and untameable spirit as amidst the burning marshes of western India. Monkeys and wild cats are found in the south, and the latter are considered game, and fattened as a more than ordinary delicacy for the table.

The domestic animals are—the dromedary in Tartary; the deer, used for the purpose of ornament; a horse, little larger than a Shetland pony; a very small ox, and a buffalo equally diminutive, both yoked to the plough; the ass and the mule; the goat and the heavy-tailed sheep, little cared for except in Tartary; and the dog, who sometimes watches the house, and sometimes furnishes a favourite stew. The Chinese never use milk, butter, or cheese; and having few pastures to spare for breeding cattle, they turn them out on waste lands to pick up a subsistence for themselves, which sufficiently

accounts for their stunted and squalid appearance. The pig, however, is their domestic favourite, for he can board and bed with themselves. He is as much the master of a Celestial as of an Irish cabin; and for the same good reason—that he pays the rent. Pork and salted fish are the only animal food ever tasted by the poorer classes, with the exception of rats, frogs, worms—or any other creature that can serve for aliment. Cats and dogs are delicacies for a higher class; with whom it sometimes happens that an ass's head is the principal dish of the feast. It may be remarked that the taste of the people for pigs and dogs is very ancient; the fact of these animals having been kept for the table by the masses of the nation being mentioned in the She-King, or book of odes. From the same authority we learn (through the researches of M. Biot) that beef and mutton were reserved for the use of the chiefs and dignitaries, who kept herds and flocks.

Among the feathered tribe, there are the eagle and a species of falcon; the cormorant, trained to catch its prey in the water, and the quail to fight duels like the cock; gold and silver pheasants, and one with tail-feathers six feet long; geese of a very large size; Muscovy ducks as large as an English goose; and common ducks that are bred in the rivers in colonies, leaving the boats to seek their subsistence in the water to the sound of a pipe. "About noon," says Hamilton of these last, "the master winds his whistle again, on which they all repair on board their own vessel in good order, some of the old drakes bringing up the rear, while others guard the bridge to take care that no strange ducks enter with their own tribe; and when all are in, the old guardians enter also and take their proper posts." There are likewise myriads of teal, which serve as excellent food, and

among them the mandarin duck, said by Gutzlaff to be the emblem of conjugal fidelity, although Davis applies that description to the goose. Wild ducks and geese, as large as the tame species of Europe, are likewise found in immense numbers in the cold weather, but return to their haunts in the Tartarean desert when the spring sets in. When these visitors alight on the rivers they look askance at numerous hollow gourds they see floating with the stream; but after some days, when the accustomed object, like Vice in the copy-books, has become familiar to them, a gourd here and there is filled with the head of a Chinese looking at them through eye-holes, and they are pulled quietly down under the water by the ambushed enemy.

There are plenty of lizards and frogs, but the few venomous reptiles are confined to the extreme south. Locusts, however, not unfrequently visit the western provinces, and lay waste the country for hundreds of miles. The white ant is also very destructive; and a spider is described as inhabiting trees which is so large and powerful as to prey upon birds. The useful insects are the silkworm, which must be adverted to when treating of the industry of the people; and a species of bee which feeds on the blossoms of the wax tree, and deposits that substance of so fine a quality that it is reserved for the emperor, to be used for candles on solemn occasions. This wax has been described, perhaps erroneously, as an animal production. It is more probably collected by the animal from the plant without alteration, like common bees'-wax. The shrub may be a variety of the American myrica, or candleberry tree, which is cultivated in Louisiana and Pennsylvania for the wax it produces.

The principal fish are cod, soles, sturgeon, mullet,

perch, gold and silver fish, and the golden carp, kept in ponds and porcelain vessels as an ornament.

The principal timber tree in China is the fir, which is used for most of the purposes of the scarcer oak. There are likewise the sanwood, peculiar to China, but not so useful as the fir; the bamboo, the mulberry, the cassia tree, a variety of the banyan, the ironwood, the camphor tree, the wax tree, the tallow tree, the varnish tree, the paper tree, and the tea tree. The six last-mentioned trees yield the products described by their names, and even the ironwood is commonly used for anchors. The tallow tree appears to be totally different from that of the Archipelago; the substance is obtained by expression; and although the candles into which it is manufactured do not give so clear a light as our own, they make up in gilding and painting for what is wanting in utility. The camphor tree yields its gum-resin by the process of boiling, followed by that of sublimation; and the timber is used for the splinter-built boats of the Europeans at Canton. The paper tree is a species of sycamore, with a rind which, peeling off in ribands, is manufactured into paper; while another sort of paper is made of the young sprouts of the bamboo.

The tea tree is a shrub four or five feet in height, resembling the myrtle, with white flowers like a minute wild rose, and a small oily fruit. The Chinese count two hundred species, although the European botanists have detected only two. It is a hardy evergreen, growing readily in the open air, from the equator to the forty-fifth degree of latitude. In China it is found everywhere throughout the empire, but more especially in the provinces of Fo-kien, Che-keang, and Keang-soo; and, like the vine, its quality depends in a good measure upon the

soil, although as a general rule the tender spring leaves have a more delicate flavour, as might be supposed, than the old leaves. "To produce a luxuriant foliage," says Gutzlaff, "the shrub is regularly and carefully pruned, the leaves are gathered when it is about three years old, but old shrubs beyond the age of seven or eight years are good for nothing. The trunk is cut, and the sprouts shoot out anew to supply the place of the old stem. There are three in-gatherings of the leaves,—the first early in spring; the second at the end, and the third at the commencement of summer. From the first the imperial tea is made. They are carefully manipulated, dried in various ways, and then packed. New tea is seldom used, on account of its narcotic qualities; it gains in flavour and value by transplantation; but when kept too long becomes useless."

The shrub is called cha by the Chinese; but the term bohea, by which we formerly designated in England the best qualities, is a corruption of Woo-e, a hill in Fo-kien, celebrated for black teas. The general division of tea is into black and green, and these colours are not produced, or rather are not manufactured in the same province; for the Chinese declare that either kind may be obtained from the same plant. The probability, however, appears to be that there is the same sort of difference (although not in so great a degree) as in the vine, one kind of which produces red and another white grapes, the general vinous taste being the same in both, with a different flavour. The green tea leaf is thinner, longer, and paler than the other; but the chief difference arises from the manipulation. "If the two kinds of tea leaves are examined," says Davis, "after having been expanded in hot water, it will be observed that the black contains the

stems of the leaves as well as some portion of the stalks on which they grew, while the hyson leaves have generally been picked off above the leaf stem. The black tea thus contains much of the woody fibre, while the fine green is exclusively the fleshy part of the leaf itself, which is one good reason why it should be dearer." This valuable plant is the more valuable that its cultivation hardly interferes at all with the land adapted for the production of food. It grows best on the ridges of hills where the soil is poor and scanty. The largest and coarsest leaves are set apart for the consumption of the lowest classes; but even these are not always accessible, for they are an object of considerable trade with the Tartars, who dispense them all over Central Asia, beaten into cakes of what is called "brick tea." Finer teas are exported to Burmah, containing only the essence or concentrated qualities of the plant.

The production of cotton appears to have received little attention from writers on China; but if we consider that several hundred millions of people are clothed in this article its importance will be obvious. Sugar is cultivated to a considerable extent in the southern provinces, but more especially in the island of Formosa. The country is rich in almost every variety of grain; but the people live chiefly on rice and millet. Tobacco is of course extensively cultivated, where almost all are smokers. Ginseng grows chiefly in Manchowria, and the decoction of its root is reckoned by the Chinese a universal medicine, and is said to be really tonic and restorative, although we believe it has not yet attracted the attention of our physicians. Hamilton tells us that it is "excellent in consumption, and for its several good qualities is sold at a great price, some at three times its

weight in silver." Indigo, rhubarb, China root, ginger, and numerous other dye-stuffs, medicines, and condiments are found in different localities.

The immense production of *opium* in China is less known, because the subject has been studiously avoided by those missionary and other writers who have united in a crusade against the trade in the drug carried on by the British. In "China Opened" only a line or two are given to the native cultivation of the plant, which is mentioned—by one who disclaims any knowledge of botany—by its Latin name *papaver*. He tells us that this papaver is "the bane of the Chinese population," being used to mix with Bengal opium. Medhurst in his long and energetic appeal to the East India Company and the British government to save the Chinese nation by discontinuing the production of the drug in India, does not even hint at its being cultivated in China. Various edicts, however, against this department of industry were published by the emperor when as yet the British trade was little beyond its infancy; and in 1836 a memorial to the government (adverse to the cultivation) mentions that the people only run after foreign opium in preference to their own, just as they desire the broadcloaths of the barbarians instead of being satisfied for all purposes with their own silks. "From Fo-kien, Kwan-tung, Che-keang, Shan-tung, Yun-nan, and Kwei-chow," says that document, "memorials have been presented by the censors and other officers, requesting that prohibitions should be enacted against the cultivation of the poppy, and against the preparation of opium; but while nominally prohibited, the cultivation has not been really stopped in these places. Of any of those provinces, except Yun-nan, I do not presume to speak; but of that portion of the country I have it in my power to

say that the poppy is cultivated all over the hills and the open campaigns, and that the quantity of opium produced there cannot be less than several thousand chests." Of the six memorials here mentioned, the one from Chekeang is given in the "Chinese Repository" as a specimen of the whole, and it mentions five departments, amounting to about half the province, as the principal seats of the cultivation. "The opium," it says, "is quite like that which is brought from beyond sea, and there are large companies of petty traffickers who, going continually from place to place, sell the drug, and thus openly and knowingly violate the laws. . . . . Around all the cities, villages, hamlets, and markets, every place is covered with poppies, and all the inhabitants are employed in the production and sale of opium. . . . . I have heard also that in the provinces of Fo-kien, Kwan-tung, and Yun-nan, the people produce and sell opium, and hence the drug is called the juice of Fo-kien, Kwan-tung, &c., according to the province in which it is produced."*

China has a great variety of vegetables for the table, such as turnips and carrots, but the people do not appear to relish the American potato, although it is very successfully grown for the Europeans in the neighbourhood of Macao. They prefer the sweet potato, which, in seasons of scarcity, the poor substitute for rice, reducing it to a flour which keeps for a considerable time. A kind of white cabbage, with a lettuce flavour, forms a principal part of the winter food both of poor and rich in the northern provinces, and it is described as being wholesome and nutritious, and of exquisite flavour.

With the exception of the orange and grape, the fruits

* "The Opium Trade, Historical, Moral, and Political." By Leitch Ritchie.

known in Europe do not attain to perfection in China; but there are various native fruits unknown to us which are found highly palatable by Europeans. One of them is a flat peach, of which the flaky part extends laterally from the stem, giving the fruit the appearance of a cake, implied in its Chinese name. The Chinese pay little attention to the improvement either of fruits or flowers; but by a strange application of ingenuity they produce the resemblance of an old forest tree growing from a flowerpot. A branch of the elm is chiefly used for this purpose; and a ring of bark being stripped off, the part is covered with rich loam, kept in a moist state till the radicles have parted sufficiently far. The branch is then removed into its destined receptacle, where it is nourished as penuriously as the dwarf horses and cows, and its twigs kept down by cutting and burning, and twisted into all manner of jagged shapes. The bark in the mean time is smeared with a substance that attracts the ants, till in a short time it acquires the roughness desired; while, in other respects, the small leaves, contorted branches, and general stunted appearance of this arboricultural curiosity, present the appearance of a true dwarf of the forest. The branch of a fruit tree, laden with blossoms, is sometimes transplanted by a similar process, and thus a short stem produced growing from a flowerpot, and bending under the weight of full-sized fruit.

Judging by the poems and pictures of the Chinese, we should expect to find them passionately given to the culture of flowers; but, in point of fact, very few are seen in the garden compared with those that

"Live in description, and look green in song."

The water-lily is perhaps the most beautiful; but it is likewise esteemed by the practical Chinese for its fruit,

which forms a part of the food of the people, as in Hindostan and Cashmere.

The mineral kingdom, more especially in the mountains of the west, is supposed to be very rich, but few particulars have as yet been obtained. We are told that mining is discouraged, because it withdraws the attention of the people from agriculture; but the Chinese have formed as high an estimate of the value of the metals as any nation in the world. They conceal the locality of their gold and silver mines from Europeans; and attach so much importance to their iron as to prohibit its exportation. Gold circulates in bars about the value of 44*l.* sterling, and, although issued from the capital, is supposed to be derived originally from the opposite quarter of the kingdom. Gold dust is found in the great rivers; and even the fine native silver, termed sycee, contains some parts of gold. Iron, lead, copper, tin, and quicksilver are more or less plentiful, but not enough so for the consumption of the country, which receives an additional supply from Japan and elsewhere. This is more especially the case with regard to copper, of which large quantities are required for the common coin of the country, which is an alloy of that metal with zinc, tin, and lead. In Yun-nan province there is likewise found a native white copper resembling silver; a Chinese imitation of which, composed of copper, nickel, and zinc, and called tutenague, was formerly exported to India till superseded by the European alloy of similar composition termed German silver, British plate, albata plate, &c. Quicksilver is chiefly used in China in the manufacture of vermilion for exportation. Zinc is found in abundance in the centre of the kingdom; and arsenic, cobalt, orpiment, malachite, and other substances in different parts of the country.

Precious stones are neither numerous nor valuable. There are no diamond mines; and although the ruby, amethyst, sapphire, topaz, lapis lazuli, and crystal are found in Yun-nan, they are not abundant. This is also the country of the yu stone, called in England jade or nephrite, so extremely hard that, like their spectacle lenses of rock crystal, it is cut by the Chinese by means of the adamantine spar. A variety of this stone is used by the New Zealanders for their hatchets and other edge tools. Marble, porphyry, and jasper are more widely distributed; and alum, rock-salt, and saltpetre are sufficiently plentiful. But coal, which is in all probability destined to work a revolution in the farther east as in the west, is abundant throughout China, and was used as fuel from an early period of the monarchy. Without coal, the extreme scarcity of wood would render some parts of the country almost uninhabitable.

In estimating the resources of China, it would be important to know, were that possible, what portion of the soil is actually under cultivation, and what progress the people have made in the science of agriculture. But, unluckily, authors differ so much on the subject that we are left pretty nearly to conjecture. We are now told that the early missionaries were led into exaggerations by the low state of husbandry in their own country; that the famous terrace-cultivation which made a Chinese hill resemble an ornamental elevation in a garden, is a mere dream except as regards a few particular localities; and that the people, however industrious, are much behind some other nations in the improvement of unkindly soils. If this be correct, there is a long course of advancement before them; the myriads of China are susceptible of increase (within the empire) by myriads more; and the country may yet become a great producer of the raw produce

demanded as material for the industry of the western nations.

But before accepting this hypothesis there are various points to be considered. When the ancestors of the Chinese settled on the banks of the Yellow River, although herds and flocks constituted the wealth of the great families, we learn from the ancient She-King that agriculture formed the occupation of the masses. Trenches of water, communicating with the river, surrounded each portion of land; the plough, the spade, the scythe,—rice, wheat, barley, buckwheat, millet,—all are mentioned; weeding is recommended to the cultivator, and likewise the burning of the weeds in heaps in honour of the genii—and to the great advantage of the land. Cultivation already began to flourish, and by the time of the third dynasty the tracks of forest extending on all sides, but more especially towards the east and west, had disappeared. Succeeding dynasties followed the same policy. The fourth of the Han emperors declared agriculture to be the most important object of the state; and the fifth placed it above the fine arts and the manufactures, ploughing the ground himself every year, and his empress rearing silkworms, as an example to the people. Long before this time public granaries were instituted, and grain bought by the government in seasons of plenty to relieve the farmer, and sold in seasons of scarcity to nourish the people.

The policy of the emperors was well seconded by the industrious race over whom they ruled. Lord Macartney calls them the best husbandmen in the world; and in the use of the spade, owing to their plodding and untiring character, they excel Europeans. Their inventions for irrigation are in the highest degree ingenious and successful; they extort land from the sea and rivers by means

of elaborate dykes; they transport soil to great distances (according to Gutzlaff) for the purpose of covering rocks; and everything that can be used as manure, including even the barbers' shavings of their own polls, is carefully hoarded, and night-soil sold in cakes and weighed as nicely as the doves' dung in the time of Elisha the prophet of Israel. Pasture-lands are rare, and, in fact, as there are no enclosures, cattle can only be allowed to feed when tethered. Pleasure grounds are likewise rare, and where they exist are of small area; and as the roads are in general narrow paths—the Chinese being usually content to walk or carry each other about in sedans—much unproductive surface is saved. Even in burying the dead this seeming necessity for economy of space maintains a struggle against the prejudices of the people which demand a new grave for each individual, or rather which respect the old graves too much to allow them to be disturbed in favour of new comers. Monuments are seen by the roadside, or in barren places where the dead cannot interfere with the sustenance of the living; sometimes the coffin is kept above ground in corners of fields till the bones may be collected in jars and placed at the cottage door; and occasionally, as in the island of Chusan, numerous coffins, with their occupants in all stages of decomposition, may be seen lying promiscuously under a precipice, denied the rite of sepulture from mere want of room.

In the mean time, while the efforts of the government and the national habits unite in making agriculture the grand resource of the people, every plan is put in practice that ingenuity could devise or tyranny adopt for increasing their numbers, and confining the population within the circle of the empire. In China a rood of land has more than the poetical property ascribed to it in

earlier England: it does much more than "maintain its man." An acre, if well cultivated, produces three thousand six hundred pounds of rice in two crops in the year, which at two pounds a day would be sufficient for five persons, or at one pound a day for ten persons. But an adult Chinese, to say nothing of young children, cannot reckon even on the latter quantity. He is fain to make up with pulse, sweet potatoes, pith, and the animal horrors that have been indicated as furnishing his table. But still the industrious, untiring, hard and foul feeding plodder has not enough. The people starve in multitudes, notwithstanding that the government every now and then distributes food and clothes among them; and in spite of the severity of the law against emigration,—in spite of the religious bonds which link them to the tombs of their ancestors,—in spite of the ties of nature and kindred, which are nowhere stronger than in China,—and in spite of the national vanity which represents the Celestial Empire as the centre of civilization and paradise of the world,—the famished population bursts its prescribed bounds, and overflows the neighbouring regions.

We are not sensible that we have exaggerated in this picture; but if it even approximates to correctness, it would seem to follow that nearly the whole of the more valuable part of the surface of China must be already occupied in the production of food; and that tea and silk, therefore,—the former from the hardiness of the plant, and the latter from the comparatively small portion of the soil occupied by the food of the insects,—are the only articles of produce which can be expected to admit of any very important increase as the media of remittance for the commodities of foreign nations. The idea that the Chinese are able to buy what they want with money, because they spend four millions sterling on

an intoxicating drug, is probably erroneous. Those who entertain it appear to forget that the sum mentioned is almost the whole that is bestowed on foreign luxuries by a population of between three and four hundred million souls; and yet is so large in comparison with the pecuniary resources of the country as to have occasioned a bloody and disastrous war between the buyers and sellers. In addition to opium, their extravagances are chiefly tripang, isinglass in various forms, such as birds' nests, &c., some sandal wood, and a few perfumes; but materials for clothing, metals, and, above all, rice, form the bulk of their foreign trade. The entreport fee at Canton on vessels laden with rice has long been discontinued, and the measurement charge was in like manner abandoned in 1825; an enormous bounty being thus offered on the importation of food.

The resources of the Chinese in manufactures we shall have to examine presently, in a brief survey of the internal industry of the empire.

CHAPTER II.

INDUSTRY—TRADE—ARTS AND SCIENCES.

The Chinese regard agriculture as the noblest employment next to literature, and entertain a Roman contempt for commerce and manufacturing industry. Their numbers appear to have begun early to press upon the means of subsistence; and being surrounded by deserts and the sea, they had no resource but in home productions, which, in consequence, it was the policy of the government to stimulate to the utmost extent. The emperors discovered that the people were easily ruled only when they were well fed; and they not merely rendered honourable an occupation which furnished the sole means of subsistence, but offered as a bonus on the cultivation of waste lands exemption for a certain time from taxation. Agriculture is therefore well understood, and better practised; although practised with rude instruments, and with few of those inventions which the science of Europeans has called in to the aid of industry. It was never

either necessary or desirable in China to dispense, even to the smallest extent, with manual labour, and for this reason the people are still unequalled in some departments of husbandry. The art of irrigation was different. No numbers of human beings could perform the work unaided, and the machinery used by the Chinese for raising water is accordingly the admiration of all travellers. Draining is in the same category. It was equally indispensable, and equally beyond mere manual labour; and it has therefore called forth to the same extent the resources of the national ingenuity.

But while this clever and hardworking people have brought the cultivation of the soil to a degree of perfection by sheer dint of numbers, these very numbers have kept up the price of its produce to an extent which retains them on the brink of starvation. Where the labour-market is overstocked, wages of course cannot rise higher than the level of mere subsistence; and that this is the case in China is proved by the facility with which service can be obtained for nothing more than sufficiency of food. The wages of a day-labourer, we are told, are fourpence a day; those of a journeyman silversmith, painter, or engraver, one pound per month; and the earnings of a common schoolmaster about the same sum. After this we are almost afraid to take the price of rice from Gutzlaff, who is the only recent authority who mentions it, at two taëls per stone—or something less than a shilling a pound, or the price of pork at a hundred cash, or eightpence a pound! Rice, however, it must be recollected, is a luxury to the poor; and as for animal food (of what we think in Europe the legitimate kinds) they consider themselves well off if they taste it once in the month.

Rice before being sown is steeped in liquid manure,

and after having risen six inches from the ground in its prepared bed, it is transplanted to the fields, and set in the mud in tufts of half a dozen shoots. After great labour in weeding and irrigation, when the grain is ripe, the water is gradually drawn off and the tufts cut singly with a small sickle. If a second crop is to be exacted from the same ground, the process begins anew without the slightest interval. All other grain is likewise planted for the sake of economy in tufted drills, not broadcast, as in Europe. Wheat is next to rice the object of the cultivator's care, and, after the cereal produce, beans, pease, sweet potatoes, and white turnips. Irrigation, manure, and constant tilth are the only means they use for recruiting the exhaustion of the land. We have stated what an acre of rice would produce under favourable circumstances, but have no means of ascertaining the average. One of the Protestant missionaries says, however, one thing is certain—that every acre of land yields as much as the husbandmen of any other country could obtain from it. He adds that three or even four crops are frequently gained from the same spot; one of rice, one of potatoes, one of pulse, and one of turnips.

The manufacture of the finer kinds of Tea demands a very delicate manipulation, but the process of changing the colour is a mystery to this day. There seems to be little doubt, however, that this is done by means of a deleterious substance which produces the bad effect of green tea upon the nervous system. It is unreasonable to suppose, without some such explanation, that the mature leaves of a plant would gently exhilarate, while the young tender leaves occasion a morbid excitement; and the long prevalent idea that the latter are dried on copper (even if that would account for the colour) is now exploded. There is every reason to conjecture that

Prussian blue is the poison, and is combined with turmeric and gypsum, both innocuous, to produce the green tint. These valuable teas are only sold to the barbarians, the Chinese very wisely contenting themselves with black. In black teas, however, they discriminate as nicely as the English do in wines, and sometimes give high prices for an article which Europeans declare to be destitute both of taste and flavour. The Russians are in like manner partial to an infusion which we should consider wanting in strength. After the leaves, properly classified, have been dried on iron pans they are curled by hand, and distinguished anew into different qualities by women and children, who separate, for instance, the hyson from its *skin*, or refuse.

The produce of Silk is one of the most ancient departments of Chinese industry. The invention is attributed to Hwang-te, the first of the historical emperors, whose empress "taught her subjects to rear the silkworms, and unwind the cocoons in order to make dresses, so that the people were exempted from cold and chilblains." In the itinerary of Yu, one of the patriarchal kings, raw silk is mentioned as well as cotton, thread, and manufactured cloths of different colours. At the beginning of the Han dynasty, silken fabrics were in common use, woven chiefly by women; and the empress of the celebrated Wan-te, with the ladies of her court, wrought at their needles to encourage this kind of labour among the upper classes. Most of the other empresses, however, occupied themselves in tending the worms and preparing and reeling the thread; although in our own day it is considered sufficient for this exalted personage to go in state once a year to worship the god of silk, and to encourage generally the production and manufacture among her subjects of her own sex. In the most ancient his-

torical periods the cultivation of the Mulberry was prescribed by law; and in the time of Confucius the general rule was for every family possessing five acres of land to enclose their estate with mulberry trees. In the present day, when separate districts of Che-keang and other provinces are appropriated for the cultivation, the spaces between the trees are filled with grain or pulse.

The Chinese exhibit their usual careful industry in manuring, pruning, thinning, and guarding from insects these valuable trees; but in the management of the worms that feed on their leaves the national character is still more clearly exhibited. So delicate are the insects, that even a sudden noise, such as the barking of a dog, is injurious; and the utmost cleanliness, and the most perfect regulation of diet, freedom from smell, and equability of temperature are absolutely necessary to their wellbeing. This occupation is more especially the province of the women, who practice, as if by instinct, the advice given by Isaac Walton touching the worm that is to be impaled alive on a hook—" handle him tenderly, as if you loved him." The loom is apparently very simple, and yet the most recherché patterns are imitated with ease and exactness. Plain silks are most worn by the people themselves; but flowered gauze for summer wear, damasks of all kinds, and coarse taffeties are also common. Their crape has never been approached, and their damasks and flowered satins rarely equalled.

The Cotton manufacture in China appears to have excited very little the curiosity of travellers; which will appear the more remarkable if we consider that at least three hundred million persons are clothed with the article, all of home produce. General Briggs has calculated that seven hundred and fifty million pounds are annually produced in Hindostan for domestic purposes;

and this quantity must be multiplied by three to give the amount required for China. The cloths produced are very durable, but they are much *dearer* than the British, and some costly stuffs are made of silk and cotton intermixed.

English Woollens are badly imitated by the Chinese, owing, in all probability, to the inferiority of the fleece. China Proper, it has been seen, can never become a wool-growing country; but the raw material might be imported in considerable quantities from the Tartarean regions. Carpets of the most elegant description are manufactured in the northern provinces; and there is also a kind of grass cloth, which, though beautiful, is not durable.

The manufacture of the semi-transparent earthenware called Porcelain has not, we believe, been traced further back in China than the Tang dynasty, about the year 630, — but a writer in the Quarterly Review asserts that certain relics found in an Egyptian tomb, which apparently had not been opened since the time of the Pharaohs, were evidently of Chinese porcelain, and with characters to all appearance Chinese! Stranger still, Davis confirms this extraordinary resemblance, and actually translates the inscription on another cup, belonging, it is presumed, to the era of Psammaticus! If there is no mistake here, we may possibly have to revert to the idea that the famous murrine cups were of porcelain—as would seem to be distinctly implied by the verse of Propertius—" Murreaque in Parthis pocula cocta focis,"—yet which appeared to be utterly refuted by the learning of Larcher and Le Bland, who contended that they were cut from transparent stone. These rarities were first brought to Rome by Pompey; Augustus was satisfied with a single cup as his share

of the spoils of Alexandria; and two of them were bought by a consul and an emperor at three hundred sestertia (2,421*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.*) a-piece. We shall make no attempt to explore this mystery; but, on the contrary, only add to the darkness by suggesting that the verb "effodere," which gives a colour to the fossil theory, may mean merely that the *materials* of the murrine and crystalline cups were dug out of the earth, to be afterwards fused and fashioned. It is known that they were imitated by the Romans in coloured glass; and silica, which is a large constituent part of porcelain, is the basis of glass. The murrine and crystalline cups, we may add, were dug, according to Pliny, "ex eadem terrâ."

Silica and alumina, or flint and clay, are the principal constituents of porcelain, and the former is pounded in mortars and sold to the potters in cakes. These cakes united with the clay form the "biscuit," or paste, and are also ground down separately with the ashes of fern for an alkali, to produce the glazing material. The excrescences or broken parts of the biscuit are likewise pounded for the use of the painters, and this operation gives employment to great numbers of lame and blind persons, who earn half a crown a month by easy but constant labour. Porcelain, like everything else in China, gives employment to many hands. One person, for instance, draws the outline of the painting while another fills in the colours; and it is said that a single piece before it is finished, from the clay to the cup, exercises the industry of about forty individuals.

The lackered ware of the Chinese is also a great object of the national industry, in which, however, they are inferior to the Japanese. They apply the varnish on wood again and again, till by mere dint of labour the grains disappear and the surface becomes like a mirror,

when the painting is laid on, and the whole re-varnished. They varnish likewise on a papier maché, composed of paper, mastic, flax, lime, and other ingredients. Everything is adorned in this way, from the commonest household article, such as a tray or a tub, up to a coffin,—for the last is not unfrequently a household article, carefully and pridefully kept by the owner for his own reception.

The Chinese work well in ivory, mother-of-pearl, and tortoiseshell; and they cut glass and manufacture artificial flowers and various trinkets with considerable skill. Gunpowder was early known to this ancient nation, but in all probability used by them only on occasions of display, till they were taught lessons in gunnery by their western visitors,—in which, it must be said, they made but indifferent scholars. Davis ascribes the early discovery of the composition to the abundance of nitre in the alluvial plains of Pe-che-le; but at the present day a good deal is imported from Bengal, and sulphur from the Loo-choo islands and other places. The relative proportions of the materials are almost identical with those of the English manufacture; while the use of willow charcoal in China would seem to indicate that Europe in all probability derived from that country its knowledge of the article.

In working in metals the Chinese are sufficiently skilful, but, as in other things, so wedded to their own customs, that they derive no advantage from modern inventions. The antiquity of the art with them is obvious from the extreme nicety with which they contrive to effect minute savings both in labour and materials. They understand casting iron, even to the barrels of their matchlocks, and have the art of mending the thinnest articles so manufactured, such as kitchen utensils, by

means of the blow-pipe. Their wrought iron is deficient in neatness; but Europe, in all probability, owes to them the invention of suspension bridges. Some of these in China are constructed of welded iron chains carried from steep to steep, and so lofty as to excite the alarm of the traveller, although he is protected by balustrades.

They are skilful workers in tin, which they substitute largely for copper, the latter being to some extent monopolized by the currency. Tin and copper are the materials of their gongs, and likewise of a circular mirror, which has only begun to be superseded by quicksilvered glass. Metallic mirrors were used by the ancients of almost all civilized countries. The Egyptian women, when they went to the temples, always carried one in their left hand, and it resembled exactly those of the Chinese. The Roman mirrors were of the same composition till the time of Pliny, when a more precious metal became so common that even the maid servants, he tells us, admired their features in polished silver. The Chinese mirrors have sometimes what appears to the uninitiated the inexplicable property of reflecting from the polished surface, when held in a certain light, the image of figures engraved on the back. This elegant deception is contrived by means of a fac-simile so delicately drawn on the front, before the surface receives its polish, as to be wholly invisible in an ordinary light. As a further proof of their knowledge of metals, it may be mentioned that they form medicinal cups of realgar, or red orpiment (a sulphuret of arsenic), and prescribe lemon-juice that has stood for a certain time in them as a tonic.

Artisans in China are looked upon as belonging to the lowest rank of the people, and their earnings being proportionably small, their skill and neatness should excite unmingled admiration. A great proportion of them have

no fixed place for their business, but roam along the streets for custom. The barber carries about his shop on his back, the cook his kitchen, the printer his gravers blocks and brushes, and the worker in metals his furnace; and it is said the last-mentioned article is sometimes manufactured of asbestos reduced to powder, worked up with gum tragacanth, or some other substance of the kind, and cast in a mould. Tinkers of all descriptions swarm in the streets, and mend broken pots and pans, glass and porcelain, with a dexterity which would make their fortune in London or Paris.

In remote times the Chinese wrote upon slips of bamboo tied together in bundles with two strings; but under the Han dynasty, in the first century of our era, they manufactured paper from the same plant, which gave a visible impulse to literature. Their ink was at that time liquid, and their pen a pointed stick, for it was not till six centuries afterwards that the solid pigment was invented which is known in Europe as China ink. The manuscripts were at first rolled into what are properly called volumes; but in the eighth century they were bound up into leaves, and in the tenth the art of printing was invented. In Europe paper was not known till the eleventh, nor printing till the fifteenth century. In manufacturing Chinese paper, the bamboo is stripped of its first green rind, split into pieces, and rotted in a pond of muddy water. In a fortnight the pieces are washed, treated with lime, torn into fibres, exposed to bleach in the sun, boiled, and beaten up into the requisite paste with some glue or other similar substance. Ink is composed chiefly of lamp black, and cast into oblong pieces inscribed and gilded; while the other implements of writing are a stone for a palette, and a fine hair pencil for a pen.

As yet the Chinese have confined their printing to xylography. The page is finely written out on paper, and then stuck upon a smooth block of wood covered with a glutinous paste, to which when dry only the written part adheres, while the rest of the paper is rubbed off. The engraver now begins his task, and takes five days to complete a page of five hundred characters, having earned in that time only half a crown. The printer's tools are a pot of liquid ink, a brush, and a rubber; and, without press of any kind, he is able, if he chooses, to throw off three thousand impressions in the day: but it is his business likewise to fold, collate, stitch, cut, and sew, and for all this variety of work, he receives only ninepence per thousand. Thus paper and print are so cheap that a work containing one thousand five hundred leaves, "done up" in twenty volumes, costs only half a crown; but it should be added, that the paper is so thin as to be printed only on one side, and that the volumes are not bound, but merely stitched in paper covers.

In the fine arts the Chinese must be reckoned backward, even in reference to their own position as regards general refinement. Perspective in drawing was unknown before the arrival of the Jesuits; and so little did they even comprehend the art of light and shadow that, on observing this imitation of the works of the god of painting, the Sun, in European portraits, they regretted the unsightly shade thrown by the nose as the effect of accident. Yet they draw single objects correctly, and Turner himself might take a lesson from them in brilliance of colouring. Sculpture, as regards the human figure, they have entirely neglected; which is the more extraordinary from the circumstance of their chiselling granite and marble with exquisite nicety, and from their

being adepts in the principal art of the statuary, modelling, compared to which the mere copying in stone is a mechanical business, such as has been frequently entrusted by great European artists to their assistants. The national manners forbid their attaining to any high skill in nudities; but their draperies executed in clay are often admirable. Their architecture, it needs hardly be said, is Chinese, just as that of other nations is Indian, Egyptian, or Greek. The form of the roof is conjectured to be taken from that of a tent, with the drapery suspended by ropes hung between trees; while the bamboo, the most likely prop to be used by them for such a purpose, is the prototype of their tall and slender column. To look, therefore, for the varieties and proportions prescribed by western art would be vain; and, besides, individual taste in China is fettered by national custom and sumptuary laws. Their lofty pagodas, notwithstanding, are striking objects, and the sites of these are usually chosen with a skill which in Europe planted a convent wherever the romance of nature demanded one as an adjunct of the picturesque. They serve as beacons along the coast; while a great part of the country is dotted with hollow pyramids in which telegraphic fires may be lighted in time of rebellion.

Although ignorant, as we have said, of an important part of drawing, they cultivate in their gardens that sort of practical perspective exhibited by the Romans in their theatres, a fine imitation of which by Palladio is seen at Vicenza. In a garden of this kind they give the effect of distance by really lessening the objects both in size and depth of colouring as they recede, and making the sides of the vista actually converge. In the theatre of Palladio similar contrivances give to a street scene—not painted, as with us, on a flat surface, but constructed of

wood, a truly magical effect. Music is another of the fine arts in which Chinese differs widely from European taste. They may be said to be a musical people; and, indeed, they trace so intimate an analogy between the concord of sweet sounds and the regularity of a paternal government, that music was cultivated from an early period of the monarchy as an accomplishment indispensable to statesmen. In the mean time their harmony is as incomprehensible to a European as ours is to them, and each accuses the other of wanting taste, just as they do in the question of fresh or fetid meat. It must be admitted, however, that the tones of the Scottish bagpipe, which resembles one of their own instruments, are ravishing to a Chinese ear; but as this musical horror is sui generis in Europe, perhaps no just conclusion can be drawn from the circumstance.

The state of science in China we must dismiss with little more than the remark that the appearance in that country of such a man as Bacon, who in England, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, sapped so effectually the antique fabric of experimental philosophy, was impossible. The Novum Organon would have been reckoned as unclassical as the New Testament, and its author would either have been pitied as a maniac or persecuted as a parricide. When Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding appeared, so late as 1689, it was burned at Oxford by the hands of the common hangman; but in China neither a Locke nor a Bacon could have existed at all. We should not, therefore, be surprised to find that in that country knowledge generally is at present in the same state as it was in the time of Confucius and Laou-tze; that the bridges and other scientific works of the Hans have never since been surpassed, or even equalled; that medicine maintains its ancient connection

with astrology; and that Chinese almanacks present as extraordinary a farrago of useful information and hopeless trash as those of the London Stationers' Company a few years ago. The Chinese have for many ages had a general idea of the circulation of the blood, although in the discovery they never approached to the completeness of the Harveyan theory. The latter, however, was not promulgated in Europe till the seventeenth century; and was not adopted by any of the older physicians during the author's life, who himself lost much of his professional practice in London owing to his imputed heresy in science. The Chinese, it may likewise be remarked, place the soul in the stomach, while certain European physicians of our own day trace it only to the close neighbourhood of that region, in the semi-lunar ganglia and solar plexus. Though judicial astrologers to this moment, the Chinese had really some knowledge of astronomy—wonderful for the epoch—even in the time of their earliest kings; but its amount would appear to be exaggerated, from the fact that they were fain to employ the Jesuits in the correction of the calendar, which is the principal use they make of the celestial science. In mechanics they employ all the known powers excepting the screw. That the invention of the magnetic compass, so long a matter of dispute, is due to the Chinese, may now be considered proved; the result of Klaproth's investigations being corroborated by extracts given by Davis and others from early Chinese authors. We may add, that under the Han dynasty they were so well acquainted with the form of the earth, as to be aware of its being flattened at the poles.

Having now glanced at the productions of the country, the manufacturing industry of its inhabitants, and the

general state of their knowledge as regards the arts and sciences, it is our task to inquire into the nature of the intercourse, in barter and exchange which is carried on by the people upon those bases within the circle of the empire.

If the Chinese had not a natural taste, or rather passion, for trade, it would be greatly checked by the deficiencies of their monetary system. Not only is the quantity of the precious metals they possess too small for so immense a population, but the application even of copper to any other purposes than that of coinage, is looked upon with jealousy by the government. Gold is an article of merchandise, and, although generally used as an equivalent for other property, it is often refused by those merchants who have not confidence in their own knowledge of its fineness. This varies from eighty-seven to ninety-nine touch, one hundred touch being pure gold; for there is no practical standard as in England, where it is twenty-two carats fine gold and two of alloy. Silver is in like manner an article of trade, exchangeable according to its weight and quality. It circulates in lumps called sycee, of the value of one to fifty taëls; and the finest is cast by government in the form of a horse's hoof, and never contains less than ninety-seven parts of pure silver. In England, standard silver is ninety parts pure, and eleven and one-tenth copper. In most provinces the Spanish dollar and other foreign coins are current, and the present emperor pays his soldiers in pieces of money of nearly the same weight but finer touch than the dollar; but the sycee silver, or native bullion, forms the principal circulating medium next to the copper, termed cash.

The cash is the only national coin, and is so small in value that it takes a thousand pieces to amount to one

taël, or 6s. 8d. But even this miserable money does not escape falsification. The country is inundated with a base coinage, both of home and foreign manufacture; and the consequence is, that cash are practically in the same state as gold and silver, circulating according to their real not nominal value, and sometimes exchangeable only at the rate of one thousand six hundred for a taël. When genuine they are of the size of an English farthing, with a hole in the middle, that they may be strung, for the sake of convenience, in fifty, a hundred, or a thousand. Authors allege that the government refuses to coin gold or silver from the fear of the dishonest propensity of the people; but we may as well be told that they prohibit certain ornaments lest they should become the prey of their thievish inclinations. Even in England, the crime is of every-day occurrence, and it is no wonder that it should be carried to a prodigious extent in China, where the law is weak, a sound monetary system unknown, and the government itself a standing example of pecuniary fraud and trickery.

The scarcity of the precious metals induced some of the emperors to bring in a paper currency, without troubling themselves to consider the state of public opinion on the solvency of the government; and Marco Paulo describes with some minuteness the system under Kublai the Mongol conqueror. Commerce, however, defies even imperial power, and if attempted to be forced is always sure to bring round its revenges. The experiment was a lamentable failure; and since then the prince has only been anxious to prevent the exportation of gold and silver, leaving the nation to its own devices as regards a circulating medium. Nor are these devices inoperative, for the people are traders by nature. They *must* buy and sell, and they must therefore have the

wherewith. In some parts of the country where silver and cash are scarce, they exchange commodities, and, from the government receiving a portion of taxes in kind, they are able to take grain as a standard. In the cities they have private banking houses on a small scale, which answer almost all the purposes of such establishments in Europe, and a whole host of pawnbrokers, who may be said to be the bankers of the poor. From the high interest of money, however, twelve per cent., it is obvious that there is not a sufficient quantity of the circulating medium in the country, and that therefore in it trade has not nearly attained to the extent which might be expected under more favourable circumstances.

But the other facilities of traffic are very great. Although there are few roads, and the greater part of those that exist are mere foot-paths, fifteen out of the eighteen provinces are intersected like a net-work by navigable waters, whether streams or canals. In the Indian Archipelago we have met with tribes of Men of the Sea, but almost the entire Chinese nation may be termed Men of the River. A considerable portion of the population, with their womankind and children, live in their boats; wherever the water expands into a large enough area, there is a permanent city of boats; and even when the amphibious family is induced by circumstances to take up their abode on the land, they drag their boats along with them, and hoisting them on pillars inhabit them as houses. These vessels vary much more in their construction than the dwellings on terra firma; but the best passage-boats are eighty feet long by sixteen broad, and nine deep; the whole of the deck, with the exception of a gangway all round, is built over with handsome cabins, and the outside is painted and gilded. The sails are usually of mats, and each vessel has a scull

behind which moves like a fish's tail. The Chinese want only one thing to be the best builders of river craft in the world; and that is a knowledge of copper sheathing, or rather of a substitute for copper, which metal they could not use without the sanction of government. In the absence of this mode of protecting the hull, they can only double the thickness of the timbers, which give their boats a larger and heavier bulk in proportion to the burthen than ours. It is said that these floating dwellings are far neater, cleaner, and more comfortable than those of the land, and the inhabitants, therefore, must be more healthy and happy than the corresponding classes on shore.

The three provinces that have been mentioned as not sharing, or rather, to speak more correctly, as sharing very little in the advantages of water communication, are Kwei-choo, Shen-se and Kan-suh. The first is the Chinese Switzerland, seated upon the mountains which separate the southern from the central provinces, and still in some measure unsubdued; and the two others—better known by the general name of Shen-se, since the subdivision took place only under the grandfather of the present emperor—form the north-western angle of the country, bordering on Mongolia. We are here presented with a surprising illustration of the fact, that the neglect of roads is by no means the result either of accident or inclination; for in Shen-se, to which nature has denied the means of forming navigable waters, a complete system of communication was established by cutting through the mountain tops, raising mounds in the valleys, and flinging bridges of the most daring character from steep to steep,—and established, too, by the first of the Han princes who began to reign two hundred and six years before the Christian era.

All the rest of the country, as has been mentioned, is intersected by navigable waters like a net-work; and a man may sail from Pekin to Canton, from the extreme north to the extreme south, without entering the ocean. Pekin might appear to be a city of pleasure, raising commercial tribute from the rest of the empire, without giving anything worth mentioning in return; and such to a certain degree, it must be, since it is the grand centre to which the policy of the court compels the mandarins of all classes to repair every year. But its sea-port, Teen-tsin, not only supplies the capital with foreign and inland produce, but is the entrepôt through which such commodities are diffused throughout the south generally, and Manchowria and Mongolia. In the mean time, cut glass, felt, pictures, books, dates, and some luxurious trifles, are all these cities have to give in return; and they consequently buy for the most part with silver, their merchants living on the profits of the sale.

Timber is brought in great quantities from the dense forests of Manchowria, and innumerable droves of cattle from that country and Mongolia. The other Tartar produce, consists of grain, sheep, horses, wool, felt, and furs, which are exchanged along the whole frontier, for teas, silk and woollen manufactures, and silver.

The northern provinces, generally, furnish grain, fruits, skins, liquors, drugs, coarse manufactures; and the more western of these, metals and precious stones. The central, grain, tobacco, hemp, rhubarb, musk, green teas, silk, coarse cloth, porcelain, drugs; and the more western of these, gold, iron, tin, brass, musk, and drugs. The southern, rice, sugar, indigo, tobacco, silk, cotton, black teas, hemp, salt, cassia, pearls; and the more western of these, metals, precious stones, musk, betel, and drugs. To these (which comprise only the more impor-

tant articles) would have to be added, in a detailed account, a long list of national and local manufactures; but it is only necessary to observe here, that, by means of the admirable system of internal communication, a perpetual interchange of a thousand productions of nature and industry goes on throughout the whole of the provinces. The emporia on the sea-coast, particularly in Kwang-tung and Fo-kien, diffuse throughout the rest of the empire the imports from the Chinese islands and the outer world, from Japan, the Archipelago, India, Europe, and America; a large proportion of which is directed to the metropolitan province by a busy coasting trade, as well as by the grand canal. Foreign commerce, however, as compared with the vast inland traffic, is as yet but a trifle. This ancient nation, secluded for so many ages from the rest of the world, has only recently began to taste, with a hesitating curiosity (except in one instance) of the luxuries of the far west, and to reclaim the barbarians by means of her tea, and become drunken herself with their opium.

The inland trade, it must be observed, like the monetary system, or rather the monetary substitutes and contrivances, has grown out of the necessities and genius of the people, wholly unassisted and but little repressed by the government. Satisfied with the glory of giving letters the supremacy over arms, the Chinese legislators allowed themselves to fall into the mistake of other great speculators of antiquity, and looked with contempt upon those classes of the people who originate and diffuse the appliances of civilized life. Next in dignity to intellectual pursuits they regard those that develope the resources of the soil; and thus the cultivator, who is the producer par excellence, follows closely the literary van; while the artizan and merchant minister to the

wants of both, the former by merely changing the form of materials already existing, and the latter by merely trafficking in them, neither adding to their quantity nor their value. "As for these two," said Keen-lung, the grandfather of the present emperor, "we do not even think of them;" and he merely repeated the sentiments of the princes of his own and preceding dynasties.

But the practical good sense of the people neutralised this error of the government, and united with other causes to secure them from the fate of the plebeians of Rome. They cared little for lofty proclamations when they stood in the way of their interest, but applied themselves without scruple to those trades to which they were called by their necessities or their genius. The very contempt in which the so-called non-producing classes were held protected them from fiscal rapacity; and the vast inland trade noticed above is almost wholly unfettered except by the transit dues requisite for the maintenance of the canals and roads. The government undertake the management of salt, the next necessary of life to grain; of ginseng, supposed to be a universal restorative; and of the foreign trade, for obvious political reasons; but with these exceptions, the people are at liberty to buy and sell as they choose. We have seen that a banking system has sprung up spontaneously out of this freedom; and in like manner each province has a true chamber of commerce. The system of bills of exchange has recently been tried, but with little success we are told—on account of the natural dishonesty of the people! The Chinese may be as dishonest as our authors please; but it would be more consonant with reason and with history to attribute the first failure of the experiment to its novelty and to the want of efficient laws for the protection of trade.

The question now arises as to the resources and prospects of China with regard to manufacturing industry; a question which, we fear, is not so closely allied as many persons imagine to that of the extension of our foreign commerce. If her tea can be called a manufacture, on account of the manipulation it requires, it is the only one worth mentioning we import; and we do so merely because we cannot get the leaf in the raw state. Silk—cotton—porcelain—all those manufactures in which, but a short time ago, she excelled the whole world, we can now carry to her, across half the circumference of the globe, and offer at a lower price, and of more beautiful workmanship, than her own. The looms, forges, and furnaces of England have created mightier revolutions than her arms; and all those calculations are at fault which, only a few years ago, would have passed current for arithmetical facts. There seems to be no doubt that, with a good currency and a sound state of credit, and a consequent extension of the banking system, the inland trade of this vast empire might be prodigiously increased. But it would be hopeless to look for the occurrence of these desiderata except by slow degrees—by the extended intercourse of the people with foreigners, and by a change being operated in some even of the fundamental theories of the government.

We have said that the civilization of India is perhaps more different from that of Europe in kind than in degree; but in China the difference, on the contrary, is more in degree than in kind. In elevating the condition of the naked ryot—in establishing in the country a great middle class, as the bulk and respectability of the nation—we gain in India just so many customers for our manufacturers as we benefit individuals; and for this reason, that the people have no manufactures of their

own to compete with ours. The wants, in fact, we would there supply we must create; but in China the wants are already felt, the supply is at hand, and the manufactures as abundant as our own, and better adapted to the habits of the people. A vague idea is entertained on all sides, that now that commerce is established on a broader basis than formerly, numerous articles of barter cannot fail to present themselves as the nations of the two hemispheres get better acquainted. This, in all probability, will prove to be correct in the course of time; but even the rapid and imperfect glance we have been able to bestow upon the history, character, and manners of the Chinese, is sufficient to show that expectations of any result of immediate importance are unwarranted by the data we possess. We shall now proceed, however, to trace historically the intercourse of the Chinese with other nations, and more especially with those of the west, and thus be better able to judge of the new prospects of their commerce.

CHAPTER III.

THE INTERCOURSE OF THE CHINESE WITH OTHER NATIONS.

The silks of the Chinese, as has already been mentioned, found their way to Europe at a very early period, by the route of Bactria or Bokhara, and the entrepôt is said to have been at seven months' distance from the frontiers of the empire. It is believed that, so early as the year 94 of our era, an army of one of the Han princes found its way to the shores of the Caspian; and we are told that the general had even conceived the idea of crossing that sea, with the view of penetrating into the Roman empire, the fame of which had reached his countrymen in the course of their commercial transactions with the west. In 161 the emperor Marcus Antoninus is stated to have sent a fruitless embassy to China; in 399 a Chinese priest travelled to India in search of the sacred books of the Buddhists; and 635 is given as the epoch of the appearance of the Nestorians in China. In 708 the Arabs sent an embassy by way of Cashgur;

and in the middle of the ninth century two travellers of that nation give an account of the empire, which is correct to this day. Marco Polo, Ibn Batuta, and some Christian missionaries followed successively; but it was not till the year 1516, when the Portuguese first visited Canton after the discovery of the passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope, that we find any regular intercourse established between China and the western nations.

The vessels of the Chinese of the thirteenth century are described by Marco Polo as being built of fir, with sometimes as many as sixty cabins under the deck, each capable of containing, comfortably, one person. The hold was divided into compartments formed of thick planks, and water-proof, so that if a leak was sprung in one it would not seriously endanger the ship. They had from four to six masts for the sails, and were moved likewise by oars, each employing four hands; and their crew consisted of two hundred mariners. When repairs were wanted, fresh planks were nailed on the exterior hull, till sometimes it acquired a depth of six planks. In the beginning of the fourteenth century, Ibn Batuta tells us that some of these vessels "had a complement of one thousand men, six hundred sailors and four hundred soldiers. The junks themselves were rowed by immense oars, over some of which twenty-five men were stationed, who pulled standing. They had on board culinary herbs, which they cultivated in pots ranged along the sides. The captain of such a vessel was a great emir; officers with their wives resided in houses built on deck, so that such a vessel was a floating city." Lest the reader should accuse Ibn Batuta of too gross exaggeration, we must remind him that Marco only mentions the accommodation between decks, and not the

houses built above. In the ship in which he himself left China, there were six hundred passengers in addition to the crew. Crawford's description of the junks of the present day trading with the Archipelago tallies closely enough with the above in all important points. They are sometimes one thousand two hundred and fifty tons in burthen; and are divided under the deck into little cabins, or compartments, to lodge the goods and afford separate accommodation for each adventurer—for all on board have an interest in the voyage. There are from two to four masts, with a single square sail each made of mats of split bamboo, and extended upon yards of the cane. The cables are made of twisted rattans, and the anchors of iron wood tipped with iron. The standing and running rigging are of rattan or cocoa-nut ropes; the bow and stern rise gradually to a great height, giving the deck the form of a crescent; and at each side of the bow is painted an eye, in order that the good ship may see her way. The hands required to work these unwieldy craft are ten times the number, according to the tonnage, of those in a European ship; and in one of the larger leviathans it often takes fifty men to manage the helm alone.

The first Portuguese fleet that reached the Chinese coast appears to have filled the natives with consternation; and the envoy it conveyed having an enemy at court, where the sultan of Malacca complained bitterly of the treatment he had sustained from the western strangers, was detained at Canton for three years before being allowed to proceed to Peking. During his absence on this journey, hostilities broke out between the visitors and their unwilling hosts; the imperial fleet was utterly defeated; and he, on his return, and all the prisoners then in the hands of the Chinese, were murdered

in reprisal for the national disgrace. But the Mandarins, in the mean time, had heard the chink of Portuguese silver, and were fascinated by the sound. In vain proclamations were fulminated against the barbarian trade—they only served to divert it from the legal channel, and to organize a system of illicit traffic along the whole coast. The Portuguese soon established themselves at Ning-po and Tseuen-choo, and extended their transactions to Japan; but being expelled from the two former places for their violent conduct, they returned to the Canton river, and about the middle of the sixteenth century began to bribe and to build at Macao, till by imperceptible degrees they had effected, without any formal permission, a settlement from which they have never been displaced, and where to-day they are subjects of the Chinese empire.

Before the arrival of the Portuguese, the Chinese do not appear to have entertained any special dread of foreign commerce. The unwieldy junks we have described crept along the shore to the Indian Archipelago, and as far west as the coast of Malabar; and a trade of some importance was carried on with Japan. Their relations with the last mentioned country, however, had always partaken of the strange character of these two extraordinary nations; the one claiming filial obedience, and the other resisting from pride and gallantry, and yet acknowledging China as the original source of Japanese refinement. The claims of the Chinese have been traced to the second century, although probably much more ancient, but they appear to have been rarely put forward except by sending an envoy, on the occasion of a disputed succession, to confer upon the successful party the investiture of wang or king. Kublai, indeed, addressed a letter to the Japanese monarch to ask him why

he had not sent to claim his friendship? to tell him that, already, philosophers desired to see the whole world form *one family*—and that he, the magnanimous Tartar—was resolved to call this principle into existence, even if he should be obliged to do so by force of arms. This letter was followed up by two different missions, but all were received with silent contempt; till at length, in 1244, a Chinese fleet met with a still worse reception, being defeated and driven back. In 1276 and 1279 a new embassy was sent; and both were beheaded to a man. The next year a last attempt was made by another fleet; which was scattered by a tempest on the Japanese coast, and the army it conveyed, on rendering themselves prisoners, put to the sword to the number of thirty thousand men. When the sinning dynasty of Tartars had fallen, about a century later, the Japanese made peace with the new government, and restored the interrupted trade between the two countries, which continued till these extraordinary islanders, as we shall have occasion elsewhere to relate, shut themselves up from the rest of the world in 1640.

Early in the seventeenth century the Dutch made their appearance in China, and made more than one attempt upon the Portuguese settlement of Macao. They were driven back, however, with loss, and were obliged to content themselves in the outside waters with the Piscadores and Formosa. The Piscadores were too near the main for either Chinese or Portuguese to look with complacency upon the new settlers, and at Formosa their propinquity to Luzon gave umbrage to the Spaniards, who had by this time the liberty of trade with Macao and Canton. Of two evils, the Dutch chose the least. They defied the Spaniards, and with the permission of China, established themselves on the rich and noble island of Formosa. A crisis now came, such as in India

gave the throne of the Great Mogul to a company of British merchants; but the Dutch and Portuguese were differently circumstanced from the French and English, and they do not appear to have been inspired with any ambitious thought by the Chinese revolution.

During the struggle between the Ming princes and the Manchows, which was ended by the latter mounting the throne of Peking in 1644, the people fled from their distracted country in crowds, and between twenty and thirty thousand emigrants settled in Formosa. This valuable importation was at first encouraged by the Dutch, but they appear early to have felt a presentiment of evil, which was not long after realized. Among the Chinese patriots, there was a wealthy merchant of Macao who had come to be the head of the naval forces acting against the Tartars; and although he allowed himself to be seduced by a title into giving in his adhesion to the new dynasty, his son Koshinga (Kuo-shin) still remained in command of the fleet, and true to his country. The Tartars, however, proved to be too powerful; the small islands near the coast did not afford sufficient refuge for the Pirate, as the unsuccessful patriot was termed; and Koshinga felt that he had no choice between Formosa and the bottom of the sea. The Chinese population of the island, it may be supposed—expatriated by their hatred to Tartar rule—were on his side to a man; and the Dutch on finding that secret agency was at work between the two, became so much alarmed that they sent for succour to Batavia, whence in 1660, a fleet of twelve ships was despatched to Formosa.

All, however, was quiet then on their arrival; and instead of the confusion of war, they found two of Koshinga's merchantmen trading peaceably in the harbour of Fort Zealand. The fleet accordingly returned home;

and as soon as they were fairly out of sight and hearing, the patriot corsair made his appearance, and landed twenty thousand men at the settlement. But the Dutch garrison was stout and true; Batavia was not far distant; and even after the Chinese had gained possession of the town, the fort held gallantly out. In due time succours arrived — ten ships with seven hundred soldiers; and when these had been exchanged for the women and children and other useless mouths, the besieged were safe —except from their own imprudence. An offer of the assistance of the Tartar viceroy of Fo-kien was made to them, on condition of their first assisting him to drive away some detachments of the pirates from the coast; and they had the prodigous folly to despatch five ships on this service, three of which were lost in a storm, while the remaining two returned to Batavia. The affairs of the beleaguered garrison were now desperate; and after a siege of nine months, and the loss of sixteen hundred men, Fort Zealand was surrendered, and the Dutch evacuated Formosa. This splendid island now became an independent country with Koshinga for its king; but in 1683, it was given up by his grandson to the Chinese, and remains at present a portion of the empire.

During the brief sovereignty of Koshinga, the English established a factory in Formosa, under a treaty with the governor, but withdrew it as unproductive in 1681. Forty-four years previously, this nation had commenced its transactions with the Chinese in an attitude of daring and dignity, which it would have been well for both nations if they had assumed more frequently, or else never assumed at all. Being cheated and trifled with by the Portuguese at Macao, the little fleet sailed up to the Bogue forts to treat with the Chinese direct; when the latter after gaining time, by messages to and from Can-

ton, to mount the nearest fort with heavy guns, opened suddenly a fire upon their visitors. The English promptly returned the compliment with broadsides, and landing one hundred men, carried the fort and planted their national colours upon its walls. The immediate result of this was, that the Chinese threw the blame upon the misrepresentations of the Portuguese, and expressed contrition for having misapprehended the visit of the English, to whom they at once granted the cargoes they desired. It is stated, however, in an account of a Dutch embassy, published by Thevenot in the Voyages Curieuses, that the English had no sooner taken their departure than they were declared enemies of the empire, and a decree passed excluding them from its ports. This may account for the failure of their next attempt in 1664, when their ships were driven away, not by the arms of the natives, but by port charges which the adventure could not sustain.

The distrust of foreign trade exhibited by the new Tartar dynasty, it must be admitted, was sufficiently natural. This rich and teaming country, whose productions seemed to be coveted by the whole world, had now been conquered for the second time by a poor and barbarous race. Surely the danger to be apprehended from the warlike nations of the west was still more imminent; more especially as the British, on their very first visit, had shown themselves the masters of the Chinese both in daring and courage. The Portuguese had at one time been almost as violent; but as the Indian dominion of that people was gradually overturned amidst the triumphant jeers of the whole eastern hemisphere, they found it necessary to fawn and cringe where they desired favour, and to meet their enemies with the arms of falsehood and calumny. This had allayed the fears of

the Chinese for a time, which were now re-awakened on the appearance of the English upon the scene. It turned out, however, on subsequent occasions, that the deferential attitude of the Portuguese was the model set up for themselves by all other traders; and the Celestials were confirmed in their assumption of a sublime superiority by the ridiculous and degrading conduct of the Europeans.

While the attention of the new dynasty thus began to be attracted to the proceedings of the western strangers, a danger of a more pressing nature presented itself in the north. Before the end of the sixteenth century the way of Russia into Siberia had been pioneered by a fugitive robber of the Don; and now the troops of the tsar, after adding that vast country to his dominions, were pursuing their triumphant march into the Tartar countries abutting upon China. Already they had erected a chain of fortresses along the river Amoor; but Kam-hi, the second of the Manchow emperors, marched an army to the spot, and in spite of attempted negotiations from Moscow, attacked and defeated the Russians, and destroyed their works. The result of this brief war was the dictation of a treaty by the Chinese in 1689, by which they gained the navigation of the Amoor; while the Russians accomplished their long-cherished desire of establishing a free trade with China. Caravans now travelled regularly between Moscow and Peking, and an annual fair besides was held by the Russian and Chinese merchants between the southern frontier of Siberia and the Mongolian desert. The Russians, however, did not bear themselves so gently as Chinese punctilio required. They committed the excesses in drinking for which they were already famous at home, and these occasioned riots; till at length, in 1722, a dispute between the two nations respecting the Mongol frontier brought matters

to a crisis, and the trade was stopped, and the unruly strangers sent home to Siberia.

A few years afterwards, however, the Russians, by means of conciliation, were partially restored to favour, and in 1728 the treaty of Kiachta was signed, under which trade is carried on to this day. A royal caravan was permitted to go once in three years to Peking, but the empress Catherine II. afterwards abandoned this privilege in order to leave uninterrupted the private trade of her subjects, which was confined to the frontiers where Siberia meets the Mongolian desert. Here the little town of Kiachta belongs to the Russians, and about one hundred and forty yards north that of Maimatchin to the Chinese, with two posts between marking the confines of the two empires. As Russia takes no part in the history of China subsequent to this treaty, it may be desirable here to interrupt our chronology and state briefly the nature of the trade between the colossi of the north and east.

Maimatchin, according to Pallas, contains about one thousand two hundred inhabitants—all of the male sex, for no Chinese woman is allowed to enter the colony; but the merchants have always a partner at Peking, with whom they change places once a year. The trade is carried on almost entirely by barter, and the principal articles furnished by Russia are furs and peltry. These are chiefly brought from Kamtchatka and the islands between that peninsula and America; but a considerable quantity is imported likewise at St. Petersburg for the purpose, England contributing beaver and other skins from Hudson's Bay and Canada. The next article in importance is woollen cloth, the coarser sort Russian, and the finer English, Prussian, and French; and then comes a miscellaneous list of richer stuffs, coarse linen,

Russia leather, &c., with camels, horses, and horned cattle. The Chinese return manufactured silks, and (by means of smuggling) raw silk, besides cotton-wool, nankeens, tea, porcelain, lackered ware, tobacco, rice, rhubarb, &c. The whole value of the trade is estimated at four million roubles, or about 800,000*l*.

Of the articles above mentioned rhubarb is a monopoly of the Russian government, and it is brought direct to Kiachta by Bucharian merchants from that part of Tartary where it grows wild on the ridges of the hills. This is the same article as Turkey rhubarb, receiving that name when carried direct to Smyrna or Constantinople; and it is chosen by the Russians with such care that the quantity offered to them is usually diminished one-sixth part, while the refuse is burnt, according to stipulation, lest it should make its re-appearance in the market. The English have almost entirely given up purchasing this quality; by far the greater part of what they consume consisting of an inferior and cheaper kind from Canton and the United States. The Canton rhubarb is grown in the southern provinces of China, and is not selected, as at Kiachta, but accepted by the purchaser in the gross. The Russians made an attempt in 1806 to establish a communication with China by sea, but an edict was issued disallowing of any trade but that by way of the Siberian frontiers. They still retain a mission, however, at Peking, which at present consists of six ecclesiastical and four lay members, who study the Chinese and Manchow languages, in order to serve as interpreters between the two nations.

We must now resume the narrative of British intercourse, which was destined to exercise a far more important influence on the fortunes of China. After the abandonment of the trade with Formosa, Ningpo, and

Amoy, the English appear to have directed their attention almost exclusively to Canton; but the rapacity of the government and the local officers, together with the high duty on tea in England, which towards the end of the century amounted to five shillings a pound, restricted this intercourse within very narrow bounds. The mode of transacting business was pretty nearly the same from the very commencement of the trade. The government was too sublime to enter into any direct correspondence with the foreign barbarians. Certain Chinese, called hong or security merchants, were allowed for a handsome consideration to conduct the traffic, on condition of their guaranteeing the duties; and on a ship entering the port of Whampoa, she placed herself under the protection or espionage of one of the body. A linguist or interpreter, and a comprador or purveyor, were also attached to her, and it was the duty of the former to procure permits for loading and discharge, and transact other custom-house business. The whole system was overlooked by the hoppo, a government commissioner, always appointed from the imperial household; and this officer appeared to exercise an almost unlimited discretionary power. In 1689 he demanded two thousand four hundred and eighty-four taëls for the port charge of a British vessel, and on this being refused accepted one thousand five hundred taëls. The latter sum is only half the recent charges on a vessel of eight hundred tons. By the year 1715 the trade had assumed some appearance of regularity; the ships leaving England for China at stated seasons, and on their arrival there the supercargoes all occupying one house, and meeting in consultation at Canton on particular days. The early part of this century, however, was spent in incessant squabbles relative to the extortions of the Chinese, in which the

latter were so obstinate that in 1734 only a single British vessel visited Canton. The same spirit spread to the other ports, being in all probability fostered by the government. An attempt to re-open an intercourse with Amoy and Ningpo ended in the vessels being constrained as a last resource to proceed to Canton; and at Ningpo, in addition to the prohibitory charges, the Europeans were ordered to surrender their arms and ammunition.

When these vessels reached Canton they found that the emperor Kien-lung had signalised his accession by remitting a *present* of one thousand five hundred and ten taëls heretofore exacted from each ship; and the European traders were brought to the Hall of Audience to hear the edict read on their knees. They declined submitting to the abject position; and, whether owing to this contumacy or not, the present continued to be exacted in spite of the edict till a small reduction was made in it in 1829. The European vessels at Canton during the year in question, 1736, were four English, two French, two Dutch, one Danish, and one Swedish.

In 1741 Commodore Anson exhibited to the Chinese for the first time the spectacle of a British man-of-war,—and a strange spectacle it was to this pacific people, to whom "a ship that went about the world seeking other ships in order to take them" was a monster as extraordinary as any in their own Pantheon. They made a thousand difficulties at first about supplying the formidable stranger with provisions; but at length became so uneasy that they allowed a comprador to ship them without any custom-house ceremony. Matters now proceeded from bad to worse. The hong merchants had a difficult game to play, and they played it with great adroitness. The law was that if a ship was not prepared with the duties at the proper time the surety was to be

distrained upon, and that if his efforts were not sufficient to cover the amount, he himself was to be banished to Turkistan, and his brethren of the hong called upon collectively to make good the deficiency. Under such circumstances the hong were not contented with a legal profit, but loaded their clients with all sorts of exactions; and these they attributed to the greediness of the higher officers, while to the mandarins themselves they declared that the discontent exhibited by the foreigners was owing solely to their ignorance and brutality. The mandarins, on the other hand, were instigated by the policy of the government to treat the unlucky traders with obloquy and contempt, so as to interpose an effectual barrier between them and the unruly populace of Canton; while the constant disputes among the Europeans themselves, but more especially the English and French, contributed not a little to place them all in a disagreeable and disreputable position. In 1750 the European ships at Canton were nine English, four Dutch, two French, two Swedish, and one Danish.

In 1755 a new attempt was made by the English to re-open trade at Ningpo; but notwithstanding some encouraging professions, the charges proved to be still greater than at Canton, and the reason was frankly assigned that by shipping goods so near where they were produced, the emperor lost the transit dues on their conveyance to a more distant port. This evinced a determination to prohibit trade altogether, except on such terms as would render it hardly worth pursuing; and Mr. Flint, a talented and energetic officer, who had acted as interpreter, proceeded in 1759, in defiance of the fulminations of the provincial government, to the neighbourhood of Peking, and laid the whole case before the emperor. The result was that the hoppo at Canton was

degraded, and many impositions of the local officers remitted,—and that when the European merchants were called together to hear the emperor's pleasure, they were thrown upon their knees by main force, and Mr. Flint committed to gaol near Macao, where his grateful countrymen allowed him to lie for nearly three years! The remark may here suggest itself to some persons that the Europeans had no right to force their trade upon the Chinese: but in reality there was no force in the case. The trade was desired by the latter as well as by the former; and the sole reason why the emperor ordered it to be confined to Canton was that he might derive a greater benefit from the transit dues. The struggle was, commercially, against the frauds of the local officers, and politically against the oppression and insults of the government, which openly professed to "rule barbarians by misrule." Various instances occurred before the close of the century of British subjects being executed by the Chinese according to their own law (unintelligible to us) of homicide; but instead of the Europeans making a stand against this violence, the victims were actually delivered up to their executioners, in one case by the Portuguese and in another by the French. It ought to be remarked, however, that if the Chinese law was sanguinary, and to European judgments absurd, it was not partial; for the very same "justice" was dealt to unintentional delinquents of their own nation who had the misfortune to take the lives of foreigners. There were also some disputes respecting a debt, said to have amounted, including accumulations of enormous interest, to a million sterling,—which had been incurred by the hong merchants by borrowing at different times from the Europeans. A frigate was sent from England to remonstrate, and the money was in consequence recovered, and

an edict passed prohibiting the hong from borrowing in future from their clients: an edict which as usual remained a dead letter. In 1770, it may be noted, the supercargoes were directed by the Company instead of sailing in the vessels to reside permanently in China, and the factories began to assume the form they have since retained. Ten years after the Company's authority to order away any British subject they chose was legally established.

Notwithstanding the many disputes, the British trade with Canton continued to make some progress, till in 1792 an embassy was despatched to Peking, under Lord Macartney, to endeavour to reduce the exactions at the former port, and extend the intercourse to Ningpo, Chusan, Tien-tsin, and other places. The latter object of the mission failed; but upon the whole the Chinese became less capricious in their dealings, and presents were afterwards exchanged between the two governments—the emperor of course assuming that of his Britannic Majesty to be the tribute of a barbarian state.

In 1802 the American flag was first added to those of the other European nations at Canton; and in the same year an armament sent from India to protect Macao, the settlement of our then allies the Portuguese, against the French republic, was indignantly informed by the Chinese that the town was *theirs*. The Portuguese took advantage of the circumstance to ingratiate themselves with their masters by misrepresenting the designs of the English. Soon after, in 1804, the Company's Chinese fleet proved itself to be capable of protecting its own cargoes from the whole world. These noble ships were now mounted with thirty guns and upwards, and when sailing homewards in a convoy of sixteen sail, carrying

property to the amount of sixteen millions sterling, fell in with a French squadron cruising in the Archipelago for the purpose of intercepting them. The merchant force was nothing daunted by the idea of coming into conflict with vessels of war, but forming in line of battle advanced gallantly—one of them engaging the French admiral's ship of eighty guns—and after a hard fight drove off the enemy, and pursued their voyage in triumph.

In 1805 a letter was addressed to the emperor by the King of England, to which the former in the following year replied by commending highly his Majesty for beholding reverentially from afar the glory of the Chinese empire, and respectfully admiring the perfection of its government. "With regard to those of your Majesty's subjects, however," the missive continues, "who for a long course of years have been in the habit of trading to our empire, we must observe to you that our celestial government regards all persons and nations with eyes of charity and benevolence, and always treats and considers your subjects with the utmost indulgence and affection ; on this account, therefore, there can be no place or occasion for the exertions of your Majesty's government."

Soon after this the Europeans at Canton when moving about the river in their boats, began to experience some inconvenience from another kind of naval power. This was the Chinese pirates, known by the Portuguese term *ladrones*, who for several years ravaged the coasts of China without interruption. In 1810 they numbered six hundred vessels of all sizes from eighty to three hundred tons, the larger mounting about twelve guns, and carrying as many as two hundred men, with an armed boat for entering the creeks and rivers. Their guns, however,

varying from six to eighteen pounders, were laid immoveably upon solid timber, and could only be brought to bear upon an enemy by wearing the vessel. Such craft were of course not very formidable to European ships, but they were able to sweep the China Sea without opposition from the government navy. After the death of the pirate chief his *wife* succeeded to the command; but subsequently strife arose among her lieutenants, and the fleet was divided into two factions, and a bloody battle at length fought between the black and red squadrons. This was just the moment for the dynasty of edicts and cajolery to act; and a proclamation appeared offering an amnesty to all who would return to their allegiance. The weaker of the two parties accepted the terms, and its chief was received into the imperial service, and employed against his former associates. The lady chieftain held out for a while; but all were at length compelled to accept of the amnesty, and this extraordinary power melted gradually away.

In 1808, in the face of former experience, the British sent a new armament to protect the Chinese town of Macao against the French. The admiral seems to have had some indistinct notion that he could carry his point with the Canton authorities by means of blustering; but after having thoroughly committed and compromised himself with them—who are the best blusterers in the world—even to the extent of being fired at and one of his men wounded, he had the good sense to retire from the aggressive position he had taken up in defiance of the law of nations and of common sense. Some years after, the English and Americans carried their war into the Canton waters, which gave so much offence that the government, unable to interfere with ships of war, wreaked their vengeance in restrictions upon the mer-

chants. Hitherto upon every unpleasant occurrence, however trifling, the Chinese had resorted to the expedient of stopping the trade; and now the British, discovering for the first time the not very mysterious fact that the game of commerce is played by *two* interested parties, at length profited by the lesson. They stopped the trade; and the Chinese, succumbing immediately, made such concessions as placed the factory upon a footing of something like comfort and respectability. Had this notable discovery been made earlier much inconvenience and many heart-burnings would have been saved; for even when the threat of stoppage failed in its effect upon the merchants on the spot, the more ignorant fears of their constituents at home forced them into the most impolitic and ruinous concessions.

The British government, however, were uneasy at the idea of a trade now so important remaining at the mercy of the Canton authorities; for it was clearly understood that the supreme government was kept in total ignorance of the true state of affairs. Lord Amherst's embassy was therefore sent to Peking in 1816, but entirely failed in the hoped-for results; although it was observed that from this time a period of tranquillity continued, with only one interruption, up to 1829. The interruption was another case of accidental homicide by an Englishman, and the refusal of his countrymen to give him up to execution; and the resentment of the Chinese was completely appeased as before by a temporary stoppage of the trade. The affair would probably not have gone so far but for the conduct of the Americans a short time before, who had the meanness under similar circumstances to give up one of their countrymen to what, according to the sentiments of the western nations, was nothing less than foul and cold-blooded murder. The

year following this occurrence, 1822, was distinguished by a terrific conflagration, which destroyed the houses of fifty thousand Chinese and the factories of the European traders.

No occurrence of any consequence disturbed the stream of trade till about 1829, when the failure of two of the hong for a million of dollars each brought about a reasonable and beneficial change in the system of credit. Hitherto the defaulter had been sent off to Tartary, and the consoo, or general body of the security merchants, were saddled with his debts; a plan which of course, enabled individuals to obtain boundless credit from the Europeans. The sum now deficient, however, was so large, that a dispute arose respecting the time to be allowed for the settlement; and the whole affair coming to the ears of government, it was enacted that the corporate responsibility should cease. Three new hong were subsequently appointed in the place of the two who had failed; but not till after repeated representations from the British that the number was much too small to transact the business properly—the representations being strengthened by their bringing the Company's fleet of 1829 on its arrival to an anchor outside the river.

We are now approaching an important epoch in the story of British intercourse with China. "In Keen-lung's reign,* as well as previously," we are told in a memorial to the emperor, "opium was inserted in the tariff of Canton as a medicine, subject to a duty of three taëls per hundred catties, with an additional charge of two taëls, four mace, and five candareens, under the name of charge for package. After this it was prohibited." As soon as his successor, Kea-king, mounted the throne, opium smoking was declared to be an offence

* This reign began in 1735 and terminated in 1796.

punishable by the pillory and the bamboo. In the fourth year of his reign (1799) the sale was interdicted; and the punishment annexed to a contravention of the law increased gradually to transportation and death by strangling. In the following year its importation was utterly forbidden, and heavy penalties denounced against offenders. All this, however, was of no avail, or rather it acted in an opposite way to that which was intended; and in a later memorial, a governor of Canton declares that "what was at first a common article of no esteem in the market either for smoking or eating, and also of a moderate price, has with the increase in the severity of the regulations increased in demand, and been clandestinely and largely imported, annually drawing away from the pecuniary resources of the inner land, while it has done nothing to enrich it."

In 1809, the hong were required by edict, when petitioning for a ship to discharge her cargo at Whampoa, to give bond that she had no opium on board; and in case of disobedience these security merchants were to be brought to trial for misdemeanour, and the offending ship expelled from the port. This edict was renewed from time to time, but always neutralized by the corruption of the local officers of government; till at length, in 1822, the connivance of these authorities with the foreign merchants was brought to light in so public a manner that some decided step became necessary. The agent through whose hands the bribes had passed disclosed, from motives of revenge, the whole system; and the terrified governor (who had, no doubt, the lion's share,) was immediately seized with a fit of virtuous indignation—degraded the principal hong for permitting such villany to go on without giving information—and acted with so much vigour against the foreigners, on whom he threw

the whole odium, that the opium ships were compelled to abandon their anchorage at Macao and Whampoa, and to proceed to the bay of Lintin, an island in the "outer waters," about twenty miles from the coast. This, however, had a beneficial effect upon the trade rather than otherwise, for the inconvenient publicity of Macao was avoided, and the Chinese fleet was able to send reports from time to time to Peking, of their brilliant victories over the flying barbarians. These victories consisted in reality of the occasional seizure of a boat which had omitted to pay the bribes, if we should not rather call them the duties; and in the mean time the government officers went on board the British vessels openly to receive so many dollars per chest; the custom-house functionaries issued regular licenses; the revenue cutters were sent to load the "prohibited" merchandize; and the viceroy of the province himself had four of his own boats engaged in the traffic with his flag flying.

It may be a question how far the emperor, who well knew the hollow nature of his government, was really deceived; but there is no doubt that the opium trade now came to be looked upon with great anxiety in its connection with the finances of the country. The balance of trade had turned against the Chinese; and the British government took pains to aggravate the evil by keeping up (as they do to this moment) enormous duties upon their great staple tea. The balance was thus required to be paid in *silver*, and we have already seen the feverish terror with which they regarded from the earliest times the exportation of this metal. Opium, as a contraband article, was necessarily paid for in silver, and thus the increasing passion of the people for the drug came to be looked upon with a horror which was certainly not diminished by its own deleterious and demoralizing qualities.

It will now be understood why the mock efforts to put down the obnoxious trade at Lintin, came to be accompanied by real insults and annoyances at Canton; till in 1830 an edict was promulgated rendering the residence of the foreigners there little better than imprisonment. A ship of war was sent from Bengal with a remonstrance from the Governor General, but this was treated with undisguised contempt, — the local officers contenting themselves with allowing the imperial edict to remain a dead letter! The success and absolute impunity, however, of the smuggling trade,—for some Chinese had actually been shot by the opium vessels, without even an attempt on the part of their countrymen to put the law in force—now inspired the committee of foreign merchants with the idea, that it would be easy to extend a traffic, not only in opium, but in all other goods, along the entire coast in defiance of the government of the country. The attempt was actually made in 1832, the English resorting on the occasion to false names and characters, and the other mean and pitiful subterfuges of conscious guilt. The expedition found the people sufficiently well disposed to trade, but the government strong enough to enforce its decisions, and it returned with a pecuniary loss of between five and six thousand pounds. The indignation of the Company at home was roused by this conduct of their servants, and they remarked with equal justice and severity on the inconsistency of the latter in complaining, as they constantly did, of the frauds of the Chinese, and yet themselves setting so daring and memorable an example. In the next year, numerous outrages were committed by the armed smugglers at Lintin; in the course of which a Chinese was killed on one side, and a lascar put to death in revenge on the other. On this the boats of the opium ships prepared to land for the purpose of

wreaking their vengeance, but were beaten gallantly off by the fire of a Chinese fort. These disturbances occurred in the confusion incidental to the great change which was about to take place in British commerce; and on the 22nd of April 1834, the Chinese monopoly of the East India Company expired at the good old age of two hundred years.

Hitherto the British had appeared, like other nations, at the gates of Canton, humbly soliciting permission to trade; and it was the chief part of the duties of the select committee of supercargoes to take care that the prejudices of the Chinese were respected, and all cause of offence avoided. Disagreements, notwithstanding, did occasionally occur, in the course of which it became manifest that the supreme government was kept in profound ignorance of the real character and position of the foreign merchants, who were completely in the hands of the local officers. The emperor continued to treat them as ignorant and troublesome barbarians, whose trade would be worth something, if that part of it could be done away with which had begun to absorb the silver of the country. Under such circumstances, prudence would have dictated that the old regime should be overturned, and the new one erected with extreme caution; that a change which could not possibly be concealed from the emperor should be communicated to his majesty with due formality by the King of England; and that the local mandarins should be empowered by communication with Peking, to recognise a political officer of the British government intended to supersede the supercargoes with whom alone the hong merchants were permitted to transact business. It does not appear, however, that any caution at all was considered necessary. Lord Napier, the chief of three royal superintendents appointed for the

trade was directed to proceed to Canton, and announce his arrival by letter to the viceroy; and he was not even authorized to appeal to the emperor in the event of the provincial authorities being found impracticable.

This event occurred as a matter of course. The viceroy refused to recognise Lord Napier, or even to receive his letter without the imperial permission; and in all probability he would have lost his head had he acted otherwise. The superintendent, on his part, declined communicating with the hong merchants, who thereupon stopped the trade, and matters at Canton at length assumed so hostile an aspect that two British frigates were called up to the British anchorage at Whampoa, and were obliged to fight their way thither through the batteries of the Bocca Tigris. Lord Napier, however, did not persist in remaining at Canton, and indeed his declining health rendered him quite unable to continue the contest. He repaired to Macao only to die; and on the frigates being at the same time removed to their ordinary station in the outer waters the trade was re-opened by the hong. It is difficult to say whether the war we are now rapidly approaching could have been avoided under any circumstances; but unquestionably the rude and reckless manner in which the British government announced the changes they had decreed to take place was one of the proximate causes of the mischief. The Chinese had been insulted and bullied; the viceroy of Canton had been forced into the position of becoming either the open enemy of the foreigners or practising a new deception upon the emperor of too great magnitude and danger to be contemplated for a moment; and after all, the royal superintendent of the British had yielded the question, retired from the southern capital, as the authorities had

all along insisted, and withdrawn the forces with which he had outraged the national flag.

Independently of the manner of the announcement, the opening of the trade itself, however proper as a commercial measure, will be stated by impartial historians as another cause of the war. When permission was granted to all who chose to rush into the business, it ought to have been anticipated by government that the principal extension would take place in the contraband department. This department, while it offered to adventurers the usual charms of gaming, was not associated, like other kinds of smuggling, with ideas of crime; or rather, in strict morality it ought to be said that in the case of the opium trade the very magnitude of the crime rendered it respectable. The British were associated with the hong, the provincial authorities, in fine, the people themselves, against the government; and certainly not for the purpose of defrauding the revenue, since they would only have been too happy to pay customs instead of bribes. In fact, although of course an illegal trade, it was by no means, in the common sense of the word, a smuggling trade.

After the stormy transactions we have mentioned, there ensued a period of peace which lasted for several years, the Chinese becoming gradually reconciled to the new medium of intercourse established by the British. This period, however, though propitious to the merchant, was spent in anxious and perplexed consultation by the imperial government. The opium trade was no longer confined to Lintin, where appearances of tolerable decency might be kept up, but in the hands of the free merchants it was spreading along the east coast, and, worse than all, intruding *within* the Canton river, where it was impossible

for blindness to be affected. But besides this the rapidity of its increase became every day more alarming. During three years up to the 31st of March, 1832, the average annual importation had been twenty-three thousand six hundred and seventy chests—an enormous quantity compared with former years; but in 1836 it was twenty-seven thousand one hundred and eleven chests, in 1837, thirty-four thousand, and in 1840, when the war was declared, it exceeded forty thousand. Where was this to stop? What would become of the country when utterly drained by a foreign traffic of the silver with which its vast internal trade was carried on? To shut out the importation of opium by foreigners, said one counsellor, there is no better way than to sanction the cultivation and preparation of it within the empire.—There is no use, argued another, in cultivating the drug ourselves, for the Chinese consumers will not care for *their own* opium but still run after foreign—just as they desire the broad cloths of the barbarians, instead of being satisfied for all purposes with their own silks:—stop the trade, therefore, with the strong hand!—To stop the entire foreign trade, interposed another, would be unjust to some nations, and it would throw vast numbers of Chinese out of bread. Even if just and expedient, however, it is impracticable, for the foreigners may choose any depôt they please, as at Lintin, and the custom-house and military authorities would become their accomplices for a bribe. Opium may prevent those who consume it largely from attaining to the length of days of other men, but what of that? There are enough of children born in China to make up the deficiency;—it is not a diminution of population we have to provide against, but that annual waste which consumes the resources, the very substance of the country. Since we cannot exclude opium, our wisest plan is

to admit it on a duty, and in exchange not for money but for goods.

The last of these advisers was sent off to Tartary to reflect at leisure upon the moral dogmas which form the basis of the Chinese constitution. The emperor might wink at the cultivation of opium at home, and its importation from abroad, but he could not legalize either one or other without sacrificing one of the fundamental principles of the government. This principle, as Dr. Morrison declared long before the period we have now reached, forbids them to license what they consider immoral. "I know," continued he, "that they glory in the superiority in this principle of their own government, and scorn the Christian governments that tolerate such vices and convert them into a source of pecuniary advantage or public revenue." To such a pitch is this carried in China (where all sorts of the very worst immoralities are practised) that a man labouring under an immoral disease runs a great risk of being suffered to perish, as no practitioner of respectability will prescribe for him, and as no treatises on the subject exist.

So daring did the opium contrabandists become, that in 1839 a seizure was made at Canton in front of the dwelling of a British merchant; upon which the general trade was stopped, and the offender and the vessel ordered out of the river, and the unlucky hong, or security, punished with the wooden collar. This circumstance completed the exasperation of the Chinese, and in a few days after the foreigners were horrified to observe preparations making to carry the law into effect by executing a native opium dealer in the square before the factories. A conflict ensued of the nature of a riot; and although the authorities yielded so far as to carry off their victim to meet his fate somewhere else, the Europeans were driven by

the mob into their factories. Upon this the then chief superintendent Captain Elliot called a meeting, and expressing his conviction that the mischief arose from an extensive traffic in opium conducted in small boats within the river, the smuggling craft were ordered outside, and he at once tendered his co-operation to the Chinese government in putting down this branch of the trade.

In January 1839, one of the strongly couched edicts of the government was published, and of course excited little attention; but soon after a military force marched into the factory square and strangled a Chinese opium dealer: which significant warning was immediately followed by the appearance in Canton of the high imperial commissioner Lin. The minister at once demanded that the whole of the opium on board the ships should be delivered up to the government to be destroyed—and Captain Elliot at once acceded to the demand. This compliance, however, was not made without some show of enforcement; the Europeans being still more closely shut up in their factories than on former occasions, and one of the most eminent merchants being ordered to a conference with the imperial commissioner. Dr. M'Pherson, in his sketch of the war, says hardily, and has been followed by many writers in the assertion, that the Chinese "laid violent hands on the British representative himself, claiming as the purchase of his freedom the delivery of the whole of the opium then in the Chinese waters;" and that "after a close imprisonment of two months' duration, during which period our countrymen were deprived of many of the necessaries of life, and exposed repeatedly as in a pillory, to the gaze and abuse of the mob, no resource was left but to yield to their bold demands." All this is quite erroneous. On the 18th of March the demand of the opium was first made, and

three days allowed for compliance; in *six days* after, namely on the 24th, Captain Elliot arrived at Canton, against the wishes and in defiance of the opposition of the Chinese, who thereupon blockaded the river front of the factories and withdrew the native servants; on the 25th, he was refused passports for himself and countrymen, and the opium formally demanded; and early in the morning of the 27th, he issued his fateful mandate to the British merchants for its surrender.

He was highly lauded afterwards by the Duke of Wellington for his "courage and self-devotion" in taking so immense a responsibility upon himself, and Davis defends him strongly from the manifold attacks of the press and the merchants: but what strikes an unconcerned observer at this distance of time, is the ready facility with which Great Britain was suffered by her representative to be mulcted to the amount of two millions and a half sterling, for her share in a mutual trade that had existed so long with the connivance of all the authorities of the empire below the imperial court itself. Captain Elliot was well aware of the habitual extravagance of Chinese demands; he knew that, notwithstanding the military force surrounding the factories, no attempt had been made to compel the attendance of the merchant whose presence within the city had been required; and he had himself declared immediately before that the mischief did not exist in the old established trade, but merely in the obtrusiveness of the river traffic. As for the execution of the opium dealer, this was but one of many contrivances that had been practised from time to time with the view of putting an end to the consumption of the drug, but which had not even the effect of stopping the cultivation of the plant in China itself. Upon the whole, it would seem that the superintendent acted with great precipitation; and it may

be a question whether Lin or the people of England were the more surprised on hearing of the surrender of two thousand two hundred and eighty-three chests of opium,—some vessels that had actually taken their departure from the coast being brought back to make up the quantity. This view of the case appears to be confirmed by the fact that a portion of the commissioner's edict which required the merchants to sign a bond engaging, under the penalty of death, to bring no more of the proscribed article to China, was successfully resisted, and the parties permitted to leave Canton in all the criminality of their disobedience.

Lin, however, whose operations appear to have been determined by the course of circumstances, now acted as master. By the 20th of April ten thousand chests had been delivered, but although the good faith of the British had thus been proved, they were retained in close imprisonment, and a positive stipulation they had made disregarded, that they were to be allowed communication by passage boats with the outer anchorages. He extorted opium likewise from the Portuguese at Macao; and it was only the withdrawal of the English from Canton on the 23rd of May after the deliveries had been completed, and the total cessation of trade, that gave him pause. This latter was an awkward circumstance, for he well knew that the stoppage of the emperor's fiscal supplies would in all probability send him to travel in Tartary—supposing it left him a head to travel withal; and by the end of October, notwithstanding various cross-grained occurrences, involving even a threatened blockade by the British ships of war, some adjustment of the various questions was arrived at, which promised to admit of the intercourse being resumed at least below the Bocca Tigris, till advices should be received from England.

A new circumstance, however, occurred to apply a fresh stimulus to the energies of Lin. A British trading vessel entered the Bocca Tigris, the master signing the bond above alluded to; and the commissioner was so elated that he at once returned to his old requisitions; intimating that if the bond were not signed by the whole of the merchants, and likewise a man given up in one of the ordinary cases of homicide, the British and their vessels would be driven off the Chinese coast, or else destroyed, in three days. This brought matters to a crisis. Two ships of war were moved up to the Bogue, where the Chinese fleet was concentrated, with a communication from Captain Elliot. It was returned unopened; and the result was an action fought with the admiral Kwhan and twenty-nine war-junks, six of which were sunk or driven ashore by the British. Unluckily, however, the victors returned to Macao after the fight, upon which Kwhan claimed the victory, and thus rendered the continuance of the war, now fairly commenced, inevitable.

It is proverbially easy to be wise after the event; but in reviewing the circumstances which led to the remarkable contest we have now to sketch, it seems sufficiently obvious that the wild and frantic energy of Lin was not met by sufficient firmness on the part of Elliot and that there was not that forethought displayed by the British government which the important change in their commercial relations with this difficult and peculiar people had demanded. At the same time it must continue to be a question whether it would have been possible to do more than delay an appeal to arms. The destruction of the opium had merely the effect of stimulating the trade by enhancing the value of the drug; the events in the Canton river had merely the effect of diverting the traffic to the eastern coast; and the general

insecurity of person and property had merely the effect of disencouraging the wealthy and respectable merchants, and throwing the business into the hands of desperate and reckless adventurers, till in the words of Elliot himself, "the coasts were delivered over to a state of things which seemed likely to pass from the worst character of a forced trade to plain buccaneering." Such was the effect even of the most stringent measures upon the illegal traffic in opium; and such were the circumstances which brought on, as if by fatal necessity, what is popularly and not unaptly termed the Opium War.

This name, however, it should be said, gives offence to the sticklers for the dignity of Great Britain, who assert that the robbery of the opium was merely a spark thrown into a mine charged with the insults and injuries of two hundred years. But it is hardly fair to call that a robbery to which the compliance of the parties, without resistance or protest, gave strictly the character of a seizure of contraband goods; and as for the absurd superiority assumed by the Chinese, it had all along been fully recognised, for their own selfish purposes, by the European nations. The best and indeed the only defence of the war lies in its necessity. Assisted throughout by the people of China themselves, and by the imbecility of their government and the venality of its functionaries, we had gradually placed ourselves in a false position, in which it was destruction to remain, and from which the magnitude of the interests that had grown up rendered it impossible to retire.

CHAPTER IV.

THE OPIUM WAR, AND THE TERRITORIAL SETTLEMENT OF THE BRITISH.

The year 1840 commenced with an edict directing all trade with the English to cease for ever: a remarkable indication on the part of the court that they had at length thrown away the scabbard. "The tone which Lin adopted," says Lieutenant Ouchterlony, "was now undisguisedly hostile, defiance was hurled in his own edicts against the British, and a large bounty was set upon their heads, to excite the populace along the sea-coast to expel and destroy them as noxious reptiles. All thought of compensation for the opium surrendered, and for the serious losses which the merchants had suffered during the tumults at Canton, and their expulsion from the factories was repudiated, as well as all idea of abandoning their right to seize and execute foreigners, whenever the savage laws of the empire should demand life for life." Still the condition of the English, residing at an anchorage

near Lintin, and a few with their families at Macao, was not practically so disagreeable as in the preceding year.

In the mean time the military preparations of the British government were going on; but as it turned out hardly on a large enough scale to make a permanent impression upon the enormous inert mass, as it may be termed, of the Chinese empire. The troops, mustering about three thousand six hundred bayonets, with a suitable equipment of artillery, besides men-of-war and steamers, anchored in the harbour of Ting-hae, the capital of the island of Chusan, on the 5th of July. The Chinese appeared to be surprised by the visit, of which they took no hostile notice whatever; but "at 2 p. m. no overture for a peaceable occupation of the town having been received, and the display of banners along the heights which flanked the principal landing-place, and of the troops along the sea-wall of the suburb, indicating a determination to resist, a shotted gun was fired from the Wellesley, at a round tower near the water's edge, where some soldiers were strengthening a parapet of sand-bags. It was immediately returned by one from the junk of the Chinese admiral; and the fire shortly became general along their line of defence, and from their war-junks abreast of the town." "When the smoke cleared away," adds the military chronicler, "the junks were seen dismasted or driven on shore, and the soldiers on the wharfs dispersed;" and after this notable defence the soil of the great empire was desecrated for the first time by the landing of European invaders. That night, as the troops in absolute uncertainty of the strength or intentions of the garrison, lay at quarters, in the suburbs without, the Chinese began their experience of horror. The men caroused on the rice spirit samshoo, till parties of them were seen here and there ravaging like wolves or wallowing like swine; the scum of the

native population took the opportunity of roaming through the streets to pillage and destroy; and in the midst of all a conflagration broke out, and the midnight darkness which brooded over that silent and mysterious city on which the anxious thoughts of the commanders were riveted, was suddenly illumined by the first terrible beacon of western war.

When the morning dawned, however, it was found that the place had been evacuated during the night, and the British entered the gates of Ting-hae without opposition. But the troops were not allowed to partake of the comforts of a town even after the inhabitants had returned to traffic as usual. It was thought advisable to conciliate as far as possible the feelings of the Chinese—to make it appear on all occasions that it was with the government the war was waged and not with the people—and with this view the dwellings, temples, and public buildings of the place were held sacred, and the force encamped in tents, exposed to the sun and the unwholesome exhalations of the marshy soil, and to the not less fatal duties of parade and guard-mounting in a temperature ranging from ninety to a hundred degrees. A letter in the mean time was sent to Chin-hae and Amoy addressed by the English minister to the advisers of the emperor; but at the former place it was refused, and at the latter was only delivered by being fastened to a bamboo on the shore after the fort and town walls had been swept by the frigate's guns. A squadron, bearing the flag of the admiral, Elliot, now proceeded to the Gulf of Pe-che-le, and on the 5th of August anchored within sight of the Pei-ho, the river which communicates with Peking.

On the 10th, Captain Elliot approached the shore in a steamer. "The appearance of this strange craft" we are told, "propelled by means which must, to the occu-

pants of the fort, have worn the air of magic, created evident excitement on shore, great crowds assembling on the banks of the river to gaze on the novel spectacle, while horsemen were seen hurrying to and fro along the flats below the forts, on whose mean-looking ramparts some troops were also observed collecting. The whole appearance of the position and works at the entrance of the river, showed that the visit of the hostile squadron was totally unexpected, and that until the report of its departure from Chusan, in a northerly direction, and of the alarming fact of its having passed the headland of Shang-tung, reached Peking, the imperial mind had never been awakened to the real nature of the 'communication' with which the English ministry had favoured his court." The result of the expedition, however, was of little consequence, except as affording an opportunity for a survey of the coast being made by some of the vessels detached for the purpose; and after much delay, and some unaccustomed civilities, and indeed honours, on the part of the functionaries, it left the anchorage for Chusan on the 8th of September, the final reply of the emperor having been to the effect that an imperial commissioner would meet the British plenipotentiaries at Canton, where the difficulties in question, which had arisen there, could be best discussed. The embonchure of the Yang-tse-kiang was likewise surveyed for thirty miles inwards; and about the same time the Chusan archipelago and adjacent line of coast.

In the mean time, as might have been expected, the comparative tranquillity of the English at Macao did not remain undisturbed. The admiral, in his passage to Chusan, had declared the Canton river in a state of blockade, and of course the Chinese took every advantage admissible in war by their own customs, till at length

they captured a British chaplain while he was practising the folly of bathing within their reach. This astounding event, occurring in the midst of an invasion of the country, is chronicled by the English writers with amusing surprise and indignation; and it gave rise to a brilliant little affair between a small British force and a Chinese battery with many troops and war-junks, at the confines of the Portuguese territory,—the inhabitants of Macao, including the threatened English families, looking on as at a show. The chaplain in the mean time was safely housed at Canton, enjoying every comfort and necessary, till he was released on the arrival of the imperial commissioner. Had an ancestral custom, however, imputed to the Chinese, been revived on this occasion, and the reverend gentleman been sacrificed to the offended gods of the country, his fate could not have excited greater vituperation.

It had been the intention of the British Government to limit the operations of the present expedition to a blockade of the principal ports; hoping, by some strange error in ratiocination, that this might have the effect of intimidating the rulers of a country entirely independent, as regards everything but a few luxuries, of foreign commerce. The force, however, proved to be inadequate even for this limited object; and the detachment stationed near the important city of Amoy was compelled to withdraw before the defences of the Chinese and return to Chusan. Lin, however, the great enemy of the English, was superseded and a new commissioner, Keshen, supposed to be pacific in his views, appointed in his place; but still the warlike preparations of the Chinese, their dilatoriness in negotiation, and the ominous tone of the imperial edicts, combined to surround with doubts and anxieties the close of the year 1840.

But at length it became obvious that the new commissioner was merely finessing to gain time for preparation; and Captain Elliot, who was now the sole plenipotentiary—the admiral having returned home in bad health, resolved to recommence hostilities. His force was at Lintin, and the first points to be attacked were the two forts of Chuenpee and Taycocktow, on opposite sides of the river. The former, after being cannonaded for some time, was carried by assault by about fourteen hundred troops, assisted by the boats of the squadron. The Chinese had before now admitted the superiority of the English at sea; but this was a heavy blow to the remaining prestige on the subject of their army. "Let the barbarians," said one of their generals in a memorial to the emperor, "but meet the imperial troops on shore, and though there be ten of them against one son of Heaven, the celestial forces must conquer—nay, even the very rocks must melt before the terrific splendour of our arms, and the dreadful thunder of our artillery." The Chinese warrior had his wish, and this was the result of the meeting in the plain language of Ouchterlony, which we give for the sake of the contrast as well as the facts:—

"Many of the enemy were killed inside the works, owing to their unfortunate impression that our troops either gave no quarter, or if taken prisoners that their death was inevitable. Acting under this dread no signs could induce them to surrender; and continuing their endeavours to escape to the last, a vast number got mixed up with our troops, and were shot down or bayoneted. A large body also were hemmed in between a detachment of seamen and marines, and the 37th Madras Native Infantry, which had been directed to drive the enemy from a wooded hill, a little to the northward of the fort, a point where they continued in force

after the attacking columns had entered the upper works, or hill fort. The troops having scattered the enemy in all directions, were sweeping round the base of a hill to enter the sea battery, when they encountered a dense mass of Chinese retreating from it, before the boats' crews, who were pressing on their rear; and a frightful scene of slaughter ensued, in spite of the efforts of the officers to restrain their men. About one hundred and fifty were made prisoners, many of them severely wounded, and about four hundred dead and dying lay in and about the fort, when the firing ceased. In one particular spot, where the rock rose with a steep slope behind some military buildings, the corpses of the slain were found literally three and four deep, the Chinese having been shot while trying to escape up the hill, and having rolled over until this ghastly pile was formed. The loss on the side of the British amounted to thirty-eight men wounded, many of them slightly, by the explosion of a field-magazine, which caught fire after the troops had entered the fort."

At Taycocktow, on the left bank of the river, the business was commenced by the ships and finished by the marines, who landed and forced the garrison from their ramparts at the point of the bayonet. The Chinese were further confounded on that day by the appearance among them of an iron steamer called the Nemesis, which must have seemed to them a vehicle forged in hell itself for the fanqui, or wandering demons of Britain. After disgorging an entire regiment below Chuenpee, she ran alongside the works throwing shells into the upper fort, and when the advance of the troops put a stop to the cannonade from the other ships she glided close up to the sea-battery, darting successive showers of grape through the embrasures as she passed. Then flashing over the shallows into Anson's Bay, this iron

devil got into the midst of the Chinese fleet, and treated them with Congreve rockets; the very first of which selecting the largest ship, leaped right into her magazine, and blew her up with all her crew. Escape was impossible from a vessel to which the shallow river was the same as the deep sea. She followed the fugitives up the creeks, clawed them out with her grappling-irons, and set fire to them, their shotted guns, as they became hot, going off amidst the flames. The whole fleet, consisting of thirteen junks, was at length annihilated by the Nemesis, aided by a flotilla of boats from the squadron; and then the troops occupied themselves with dismantling the captured works, where they found ninety-seven guns, and in destroying the buildings and stores.

But all this waste of life and property was destined to be of no avail. The whole fleet stood up the river to attack the Bogue forts; and they had already neared the great Anunghoy battery, the main defence at that end of the passage, the leading seventy-four forging a-head, slow and dreadful, with a light wind, and the rest of the fleet following in her wake, when suddenly a white signal was seen from Captain Elliot's ship. A new request had been made to the plenipotentiary for a new truce; and on the 20th of January he announced, that Hong Kong was to be ceded by treaty to the British crown—that an indemnity of six million dollars was to be paid by the Chinese—that direct official intercourse between the two countries was to be established—and that the trade of Canton was to be re-opened. To Captain Elliot is due the praise of a profound faith in the integrity of human and Chinese nature; and without demanding any pledge from a man who had so frequently before been the agent of deceit, he at once despatched the fastest sailer in the fleet with orders for the evacuation of Chusan,—the

Chinese commissioner obligingly sending a duplicate of the despatch overland by the imperial express, in order that no delay might take place. Keshen upon this published an edict in which we find these words :—"The English barbarians are now obedient to orders, and, by an official document, have restored Tinghae and Shaheo; invoking me with the most earnest importunity that I should for them report, and beg the imperial favour;" and Elliot in his circular remarked that "he cannot conclude without declaring that next to these causes, the peaceful adjustment of difficulties must be ascribed to the scrupulous good faith and enlarged opinions of the very eminent person with whom negotiations are still pending." On the 26th of January the British flag was hoisted upon the island of Hong Kong: but there was no more word of the treaty. The Emperor, instead of ratifying the agreement of Keshen, handed him over to the board of punishments; and instead of giving the English islands and money, he ordered them to be exterminated. "On reading the report," said his majesty, "how could I repress my indignation, detestation, and grief? I did not calculate that Keshen was so weak and cowardly, and destitute of ability, that he should go to such extremes. As for the English, that detestable brood have been guilty of great and most unreasonable rebellion, and neither all that heaven canopies, nor all that earth contains will bear with them. If we do not inflict on them utter destruction and extermination, how will the just vengeance of heaven be exemplified, and the majesty of the empire be manifested?" Troops, in the mean time, were pouring into Canton from all parts of the country, and the batteries of the Bogue, under the eyes of the British themselves, were in all the bustle of warlike preparation. The stipulated day passed; and at length—many days

after—on the 23rd of February, hostilities were recommenced by some English pinnaces dashing into a narrow channel of the river at the back of Anunghoy, and spiking a masked battery and field-work, consisting of eighty pieces of artillery, without the loss of a man.

The Bocca Tigris, or Tiger's Mouth, is called the Gibraltar of China, and its fortifications were reckoned impregnable by the natives. The river there, where the island of Anunghoy would form the northern angle of Anson's Bay but for the narrow channel the scene of the pinnaces' exploit, narrows to a breadth of two miles, in the midst of which are two islets, north and south Wangtung, to which thick iron chains were carried, closing up the passage. The outer, or western passage, was not supposed to have sufficient water for large ships, although it was at length ascertained to contain a channel by which two-deckers might pass up. On that side of the river there was likewise a formidable battery, and the brow of the hill, as at Anunghoy, was one continued line of encampment. "So thickly," says Dr. Pherson, "was this island studded with workmen and troops, that at a distance it resembled an ant-hill." Its forts were built of solid blocks of granite, with sand-bag batteries bristling with guns, some of enormous calibre, gaping ravenously along the shore. The opposite islet of North Wangtung was one entire fortification, a double battery occupying the eastern and western sides, while these were connected at both ends by a strongly fortified breastwork. The citadel, on a rising ground, commanded with its heavy guns a wide range on all sides; and the interior was one crowded encampment of troops.

Such was on that day the celebrated pass of the Bocca Tigris; but the Chinese, with all their skill, and untiring industry, had committed the prodigious oversight

of leaving unfortified the islet of South Wangtung. Here the English landed their howitzers without opposition, and, before the ships could move into their positions, continued shelling the enemy for several hours without sustaining themselves a single casualty. At length the fleet was in position both in the eastern and western channels, and before noon the roar of the cannonade began; an advance squadron passing on to the south of the Chinese defences, and greeting Wangtung with their guns on the way. "The firing," says a military eye-witness, "had now become general on both sides; and the day being fine, and the wind strong enough to clear away the smoke from the vessels and forts as fast as it arose, the spectacle presented was striking and impressive in no ordinary degree; the roar of the rapid broadsides of the shipping being re-echoed back in grand reverberations from the steep hills and valleys which bound the celebrated passage of the Tiger's Mouth."

After the cannonade had continued for nearly two hours, an inconsiderable force was landed both on the island and the islet, and carried the works with perfect ease, committing in the latter, however, a great and needless slaughter. At Anunghoy the successful party consisted of three hundred sailors and marines, led by the veteran Admiral Senhouse; and on penetrating to the centre of the fort they found a small body of Chinese drawn up in good order, and headed by an aged and venerable-looking man, whose blue button and peacock's feather proclaimed him to be a mandarin of high rank. These were now the sole defenders of the Bocca Tigris, yet they asked no quarter. The patriarchal chief came gallantly on, brandishing his two-handed sword, till a musket-bullet passed through his noble heart. This was the valiant Admiral Kwan; and the next day, as his

remains were carried away by his countrymen in a coffin, the veteran Senhouse fired minute guns from the Blenheim, and hoisted the Chinese ensign half-staff high, in honour of his brother commander. The most obstinate resistance was made on the western side of the river, but on the marines pressing in by the embrasures of the fort its defenders at length gave way; and their flight over the neighbouring hills, as the day closed in, was lighted by the flames of their dwellings, tents, and stores, set on fire by the vengeful victors.

About five hundred pieces of cannon were taken on this memorable day, and upwards of six hundred Chinese slain,—while on the side of the British not one man was killed, and only a few were wounded.

The heavy ships and transports were left to demolish the Anunghoy batteries, and a detachment to garrison North Wangtung, and on the next day the rest of the squadron proceeded up the river. At Second Bar a raft was found constructed from bank to bank, defended on one side by an entrenched camp of two thousand Tartars, and on the other by a British ship, which had been purchased by the Chinese before the arrival of the expedition. The affair was over in an hour and a half, although the Chinese fought well, leaving two hundred dead bodies to attest their valour; the British on this occasion losing *one* man. When all was over the Anglo-Chinese ship was set on fire. "She had everything aloft," says a letter from the spot, "the gallant-yard across, with all her sails bent, and burnt most beautifully; she had a large magazine of powder on board, and in the evening when she blew up it was one of the most splendid sights I ever beheld, as all her masts were standing at the time, and the flames making rapid progress in the rigging and sails, and in a moment there was not a vestige of her

to be seen." The invading squadron, now reinforced by General Sir Hugh Gough, the commander of the land forces, pursued its triumphant way up the river, its successes being interrupted only by one or two of the usual truces; till at length, on the 20th of March, when the ships had reached Canton, captured all the works before the city, sunk or otherwise destroyed the Chinese shipping, and planted the British flag on the British factory without having lost another man, the plenipotentiary announced a suspension of hostilities and the reopening of the trade. The Nemesis had in the mean time crept up a back passage from Macao to Whampoa where European sail had never before been seen, and where the river was not broader than her own length, and gliding past the doors and windows of the gaping Chinese created terrible destruction among the guns and boats.

"Thus for the first time in the history of China," says Commodore Bremer in his despatch, "have ships been brought under the very walls of Canton, and by channels and branches on which a foreign ship never before floated. I believe the Chinese were not acquainted with the capabilities of their splendid river; assuredly they had no idea that the second city in the empire could be assailed by ships of war on its waters: I trust that the fact will have its due influence on the authorities, and I have no doubt that the forbearance displayed towards a city so completely at our mercy as this is, will be appreciated by the better classes of the community who have everything to lose, and the benevolence of the British character more fully understood than it ever yet has been in this country."

With these hopes the fleet returned to Hong Kong; and by this forbearance, as it proved, sacrificed all the

advantages that had been gained. Before the attack on the Bocca Tigris, Keshen had sent in a report to the emperor, clearly showing that the position was untenable; but the reply was full of pride and indignation, and even after the English squadron had reached Whampoa, his majesty published an edict in which were these words:— "Being destitute of all reason, and contemptuously regarding our celestial dynasty, these barbarians have carried their unsubmissive rebellions to this extreme, and I, the Emperor, now swear that both powers shall not stand (one or the other must conquer or die): let Yihshan, Lungwan, and Yangfang, at the time reckoned upon for their arrival, forthwith put in order our patriotic troops, and with undivided efforts seize the English barbarians, and make an entire extermination and end of the whole of them." Soon after this the luckless minister was degraded and handed over to the board of punishments; and although trade was actually resumed at Canton, the military preparations of the Chinese continued without interruption, and an uneasy feeling gained ground among the merchants on both sides from day to day.

At length towards the middle of April the Chinese townsmen withdrew altogether from the suburbs, and the British fleet began to move up the river, and rendezvoused in the Macao passage. On the night of the 21st hostilities were recommenced by the enemy, who sent fire-rafts among the British vessels opposite the factories, and opened a cannonade upon them from the batteries along the shore. This was met by the British force, so fortunately at hand, as well as the darkness permitted, and the confusion of the night was increased by the mob of Canton bursting upon the factories, and laying them in ruins. On the 24th of May a royal salute was fired

from the ships in honour of Queen Victoria's birth-day; and with the sound of the guns still in their ears, and the wild hurrah on their lips, the troops to the number of two thousand two hundred men were placed in various craft for debarkation, and on landing were joined by about a thousand sailors and marines. One column took possession of the factories, and another of the village of Tsinghae, five miles above by the river line. The debarkation of the latter force was not completed till the following morning, when they began their march of about three miles and a half, through an undulating country, till they reached the heights of Canton, crowned by four strong forts and the city walls. Their progress was obstinately disputed by the Chinese, who kept up a constant fire throughout nearly the whole of the day—but all was unavailing; fort after fort fell before their desperate rush; and the proud standard of Great Britain looked down into the mighty city. On the morning of the 26th it was obvious that consternation had seized this city of a million souls, for the whole country around was covered with its flying population; but just as General Gough had determined on taking the southern capital of China by assault a flag of truce was hoisted on the walls. The result was that Canton was held to ransom for six million dollars; and the troops having bivouacked on the heights, till the greater part of the money was paid, re-embarked on the 1st of June, and returned to their old quarters at Hong Kong, having lost in these operations the comparatively large number of one hundred and thirty men. From this datum the slaughter among the Chinese may be imagined! The official bulletin sent to the Emperor on the occasion contains the following curious and characteristic passage:—

"Your minister thought that the city was in danger;

that there had been repeated disturbances, and that the whole people were prostrated in mud and ashes: I, therefore, prevailed upon myself to temporize, considering again that this was a solitary city to be fought against, and that both the fat and liver were greatly injured. There was, moreover, no battle-field for deploying a great army, and I could not do otherwise than beguile them to go out to the Bogue. Then we shall repair our forts, and again endeavour to attack and exterminate them, and recover our old territory of Hong Kong."

To this his majesty replied in an edict, commending him for having driven back the barbarian dogs—permitting them to trade on their humiliating themselves in a proper manner—and ordering their extermination in the event of their appearing to presume on the imperial clemency.

The death of the veteran Senhouse, the recall of Captain Elliot, the departure of Sir G. Bremer in bad health, and the arrival of Sir Henry Pottinger and Sir William Parker, the former as plenipotentiary and the latter as admiral of the East India and Chinese station, were now the principal events. The new plenipotentiary immediately on his arrival published a notification, declaring that he would allow no considerations connected with mercantile pursuits, or other interests, to interfere with the strong measures he might find it necessary to adopt for compelling an honourable peace; that he was willing to respect the existing truce, but not for a moment after the slightest infraction of its terms by the Chinese; that the habitual perfidy of the enemy rendered this infraction extremely probable, and that no foreigner, therefore, must put himself or his property in the power of the Chinese authorities, except at his own risk and peril. This frank and spirited document an-

nounced, likewise, that the island of Hong Kong would be retained till her Majesty's decision respecting it was known. The truce, it will be observed, merely respected the Canton river, where trade went on as usual; but the main quarrel remained still untouched, and by the 21st of August the fleet was under weigh for the north, and rendezvoused off the harbour of Amoy on the 25th.

The batteries of Amoy, it will be recollected, had "driven off" British ships on two former occasions, and were, therefore, considered impregnable by the Chinese; and, indeed, if they had been manned as well as they were built and mounted, their capture would have been extremely difficult. The entrance to the harbour, only six hundred yards wide, was flanked by strong fortifications, and the great sea-line of defence extended for a mile in one uninterrupted battery, built of solid granite faced with turf and mud several feet thick. The fire of the ships upon works like these, though continued for two hours, was not attended with the slightest effect; but on the troops landing, the garrison entered with scarcely an attempt at resistance. The city was abandoned by the enemy during the night, but being too extensive for occupation the British merely left a garrison on the island of Ko-long-soo at the entrance of the harbour, and pursued their voyage northwards.

Chusan had been evacuated by the British, according to Captain Elliot's orders; and the interval had been so busily employed by the Chinese in strengthening the old works, and constructing new ones, that the place could hardly be recognised. The fortifications resembled those of Amoy, an uninterrupted line of battery extending along the sea face, and every eminence commanding the approach to the harbour being planted with cannon; but, owing to the ignorance of the Chinese of

military tactics, their great battery was of no use but in exchanging shots with the ships, while some howitzers, placed on an undefended islet, distracted their attention by shelling the joss-house hill fort. The squadron came into position on the 1st of October, and the troops were disembarked, under a heavy fire from the shore, below some hills, which, when their summits were gained, enabled them to turn completely the whole line of works. The Chinese crowded the heights above, pouring down a continued shower of shot; but nothing could impede the advance of the invaders, who drove everything before them till they reached the walls of the town, which they carried by escalade. The loss of the British in this action was three men killed, and a few slightly wounded.

Opposite Chusan is the Ta-hae river, with the city of Chin-hae at the entrance, and that of Ningpo higher up; and the reduction of these places was the next object of the expedition. At the entrance of the river is a peninsular rock or mount, two hundred feet in height, crowned with a citadel, which is reckoned the key to the two cities. The isthmus, connecting this mount with Chin-hae, was defended by cannon, and at the city and fronting the river were two batteries; while the walls of the town itself were bristled with guns pointed towards the water. Within those walls, on the present occasion, were said to be three thousand Tartar troops, and the citadel was garrisoned with four hundred. On the opposite bank of the river the principal landing place was defended by batteries, and the heights above were crowned with redoubts, marking a continued chain of entrenched camps, in which the Chinese were posted to the number of ten thousand men.

On the 9th of October, the whole of the squadron was anchored off Chin-hae, and on the following morning an

attack was made by the ships upon the citadel, while the troops were landed upon the opposite bank. The former was steadily battered and shelled till a breach was effected, and the marine forces landing entered at the same moment the garrison was flying towards the city. Waiting only to hoist the union jack on the summit, they rushed after the fugitives, escaladed the walls, and chased the Chinese troops out of the opposite gate. The same success attended the operations on the other side of the river. The forces landed in spite of all opposition, and planted the British ensign on battery after battery, redoubt after redoubt, till the struggle became on the part of the Chinese a flight, and on that of the English a base and brutal carnage. A great body of the fugitives were attempting to make their escape from one column of the assailants by means of a bridge, when they were met by another. "It is not difficult," says a military writer, "to conceive the scene which ensued. Hemmed in on all sides, and crushed and overwhelmed by the fire of a complete semi-circle of musketry, the hapless Chinese rushed by hundreds into the water; and while some attempted to escape the tempest of death which roared around them, by consigning themselves to the stream, and floating out beyond the range of fire, others appeared to drown themselves in despair. Every effort was made by the general and his officers to stop the butchery, but the bugles had to sound the 'cease firing' long and often before the fury of our men could be restrained. The fifty-fifth regiment of Madras rifles having observed that a large body of the enemy were escaping from this scene of indiscriminate slaughter along the opposite bank of the river from the citadel and batteries which the naval brigade had stormed, separated themselves, and pushing across the bridge of boats, severed the retreating column in two;

and before the Chinese could be prevailed upon to surrender themselves prisoners, a great number were shot down and driven into the water and drowned." Four thousand Chinese, it is said, were killed on this day, many of them, it is to be feared, murdered in their flight, by troops who had not lost a score of men since the beginning of the war; and whose casualties on the present occasion were only three killed and nineteen wounded. "Every officer and soldier," says General Gough in his report, "has merited my approbation!" When the butchery was over, the victors amused themselves with cutting off the tails of the captives; and they then proceeded to Ningpo, where one thousand British troops marched unopposed into a city of six hundred thousand souls, playing "God save the Queen," the sailors in the river startling the echoes of the rich and garden-like banks with their answering hurrah!

At the beginning of 1842, detachments of the English troops were comfortably housed at Ningpo, Chin-hae, Chusan, Amoy, and Hong Kong; although generally speaking the paucity of their numbers rendered their duties harassing. At Canton, where the populace had been for centuries instilled by the policy of the government with sentiments of hatred and contempt of the Europeans, there was still, of course, much bad feeling; and during the bivouac of the conquering army on the heights above the city, the mandarins had been only partially successful in keeping down the enraged inhabitants. But elsewhere, the Chinese saw in the English only the enemies of their Tartar masters; and immediately on the defeat of the latter, they returned quietly to their houses and occupations. The Tartar soldiery, on the other hand, being identified with the government, felt themselves to be objects not only of warfare but of vengeance, and their

resistance was proportionably desperate. In many cases their chiefs destroyed themselves, not in the fury of despair but calmly and deliberately, when the fight was lost, some cutting their throats, others walking coolly into the water, and drowning themselves before the eyes of their conquerors. In the mean time, the pirates, or those whom the troubles of the time had converted into outlaws, took advantage of the interregnum in customary authority to ravage the country; but it was the policy of the English to put down every armed force but their own; and these wretches were cut in pieces, shot, or drowned at sea, while on the land, when they fell into the hands of the peasantry, they were sometimes beaten to death, and sometimes burnt alive.

Although the English had entered Ningpo so easily, they were not destined to retain it without a struggle. On the 10th of March, when they were supposed to have been lulled into fatal security, a desperate attempt upon the city was made by a force of ten or twelve thousand Chinese, a detachment of whom actually forced one of the gates, and marched towards another to join forces with their comrades, who they incorrectly supposed had been equally successful in that quarter. They were met instead by a portion of the garrison, and driven back with great loss; when the gate still in dispute, but from which the Chinese by this time had begun to retire, was suddenly thrown open, and a small party of the English sallied forth.

"They soon found themselves in front of a dense mass of troops," says Ouchterlony, "drawn up along the main street, upon whom Lieutenant Molesworth, although accompanied by a mere handful of men, instantly opened a sharp fire of musketry, which the Chinese returned with much spirit, and showed a disposition to advance upon their

assailants. At this juncture, Captain Moor's howitzer came up, and, being run to the front, immediately opened upon the living wall before them with case shot, at a distance not exceeding twenty or thirty yards. The effect was terrific, for the street was perfectly straight, and the enemy's rear, not aware of the miserable fate which was being dealt out to their comrades in the front, continued to press the mass forward, so as to force fresh victims upon the mound of dead and dying which already barricaded the street. The head of the column fell literally like the 'Moor's swath at the close of day,' and the howitzer only discontinued its fire from the impossibility of directing its shot upon the living foe, clear of the writhing and shrieking hecatomb which it had already piled up." The Chinese were pursued for six miles and slaughtered to the number of four hundred, without the loss of a single man on the part of the English. A good idea of the carnage that took place in the street is conveyed by the fact, that in removing the pile of human bodies, a pony was discovered beneath them alive and unhurt.

At Chin-hae a similar movement of the enemy took place, but the garrison being warned in time, the assailants were received with so heavy a fire that they at once took to flight. It is supposed that these attempts were only parts of a comprehensive scheme which included likewise the destruction of the British at Chusan; but the alertness of the fleet and the furious bravery of the land forces rendered all unavailing. The preparations had probably been going on for a considerable time, for the fire-rafts of the enemy, though as innocuous as usual, were more elaborately constructed; and the emperor had issued an edict for the special benefit of the British troops, compassionating the case of such of them, whether English or Indian, as had been led on to the war

against their will:—"Wherefore is this clear proclamation issued. If, in the day of battle, either red or black barbarians will, should they be on shore, cast away their arms, and kneeling offer submission, or should they be afloat, refuse to fire, they shall in all times be spared alive. Any who shall seize and deliver a great barbarian eye (chief) shall be rewarded with a high dignity. And who shall make prisoners of the common demons (privates or sailors), shall be richly rewarded with money, and if any shall deliver up a foreign vessel, they shall receive for their reward whatever goods the vessel shall contain."

General Gough now determined to follow up these successful repulses, and take the attacking columns in detail. He ascended the main branch of the Ta-hae river, and found the enemy encamped on the hills near the city of Tse-ke, twenty miles from Ningpo. His report is curiously characteristic of this truly infernal war—announcing another "glorious victory" over the Chinese, gained by one thousand British troops over eight thousand of the *élite* of the imperial army, the former (being under divine protection, as the general tells us) killing one man apiece—one thousand in all—and losing themselves only three individuals. The general praises highly the chivalrous enthusiasm of his troops, the devoted valour with which they killed the Chinese during their flight, and their coolness in discriminating, even under such exciting circumstances, between the peasants and the soldiers, taking the lives only of those fugitives who were dressed in a military garb, and slaughtering in comparatively few instances the peaceful cultivators of the soil. "At the moment," says he, in another part of the document, "when the admiral had nearly gained the height, I perceived a large body of

Chinese ascending the back of the hill which he was attacking, apparently ignorant of the conjoint attack, and I directed ——— to push forward with the ——, supported by a battalion company, to cut off their retreat. The carnage at the foot of this hill was extraordinarily great; the —— in the rear and the naval brigade in the front almost annihilated this body, while the remainder of the —— pressed the retiring enemy, I cannot say his columns, as the whole plain was covered with the dispersed and flying foe. The —— and ——, finding that they were too late to participate in the attack on the encampments, rapidly dashed into the plain and cut off the Chinese from their only safe retreat in the Chang-ki pass, killing numbers; and one company followed up the pursuit for several miles towards Yu-yaun. The ——, having left one company to protect the guns, pressed forward into the plain, and joined in the pursuit. It was eight o'clock before the force re-assembled, when we occupied the enemy's encampment —where the men found ample bedding and comforts!"

The Tartars had hitherto been met with merely as portions of the imperial army; but they were now to be seen in their own homes fighting in defence of their wives and children. The next point of attack was Cha-poo on the opposite side of the bay, or rather gulf from Ting-hae, the distance being sixty miles across; and here was one of the city encampments, as they may be called, of the Tartars, who usually live in a distinct quarter from the Chinese, separated by ramparts of its own connected with the walls of the town. On this occasion these descendants of the desert-born, in all probability out of consideration for their families, forsook the comparative security of their fortifications, and invited the war on a range of hills commanding the shore; but with the same

fortune we have so often described. They fled into the city, all but a body of three or four hundred, whose retreat was cut off, and who took refuge in an isolated building.

The house presented a dead wall externally, with a single gate leading into an inner court, into which the chambers opened ; and in this court the Tartars made their lair, and received their pursuers with so deadly a fire that they were compelled to retreat. Rockets were now thrown into the building, but their explosions took place amidst the gallant cheers of the defenders. A field-piece was then brought into play, and a breach effected by the explosion of a fifty-pound bag of powder ; but the storming party was beaten back by a heavy fire from behind a trellis-work round the room. Neither shot, nor rockets, nor bayonets appeared to have the slightest effect, although an uninterrupted attack was kept up for three hours. No quarter was asked—none offered! Two or three occasionally made a dash to escape by the valley, but were shot mercilessly down. "It was now resolved to set fire to the building, and a second breach having been blown on the opposite side, some wood was collected, and a fire kindled, which soon spread to the roof, composed of dry, light pine rafters and beams, and in a short time the house was reduced to ruins. Some fifteen or sixteen of the enemy, who became exposed by the throwing down of a portion of the outer wall, were destroyed by a volley from without, and on our troops being at length suffered to enter within the smoking and shattered walls, they found that all resistance had ceased. But few of the Tartars were bayoneted after the joss-house had been carried, and the survivors, most of whom were found crouching on the ground, with their arms folded, and their matchlocks and swords laid

aside, in evident expectation of a violent death, and with a manifest resolution to meet it as became men, were taken out and shortly afterwards set at liberty. Of the whole body, however, who had originally taken post in the fatal joss-house, only sixty were made prisoners, many of them wounded, all the rest having been shot, bayoneted, or burned in the fire which consumed the building; the last must have been the fate of many of the wounded, whose forms, writhing in the agonies of so frightful a death, were seen by the troops outside, who were unable to afford them succour."

But even this is not all. Within the city encampment, within their strong ramparts, on the floors of their small neat houses, on the walks of their tiny plots of neatly cultivated ground, were found the bodies of the Tartar women and children, bloody with wounds, or blackened by poison. "Impelled by the same feeling of exclusiveness and pride which characterises their habits of life as well as of government, it seems that the Tartars of Cha-poo, even when defeated and driven from their entrenchments on the heights, never for a moment contemplated removing their families from the town, and escaping beyond our pursuit, but with a stern resolution to maintain to the last the inviolability of their homes (which, though we decry it as barbarian, must yet command a share of our respect), preferred staining them with their blood, to surviving to abandon them to the polluting touch and presence of the invader. Of the females found dead and dying in the 'Tartar city,' many had evidently not been their own executioners, but the greater number appeared to have destroyed themselves by strangulation, or by poison, after hearing of the defeat of their troops outside the city, and impelled, doubtless, by the exhortations and threats of the fugitives from the field, and by

the near approach of the dreadful foreigners, at whose hands they had been taught to expect the most unheard of atrocities. Many Tartar soldiers were also found dead within the city, with their throats cut, apparently with their own daggers, who must have thus fearfully ended their career after consummating the cruel sacrifice of the lives dearest to them."

The neighbouring hills, where the ensigns of battle had fluttered so gallantly in the morning, were now covered with slain; the fields in the rear where the fugitives had been met by the ruthless victors, were like a slaughter-house; the town was gutted of its wealth by British and Chinese plunderers, alike lighted to their spoil by the flames of burning houses: but within the Tartar city was the utter silence of desolation and death.

And all this turned out, unhappily, to be of not the slightest utility for the purposes of the war. Cha-poo was of no consequence at all in itself; its possession being of importance merely with a view to ulterior operations against the capital of the province, and these operations were now suddenly abandoned, and the gorged expedition, having lost ten men, set sail for the Yang-tse-kiang.

The estuary of this great river is cut in two by the island of Tsung-ming, opposite to which, on the right bank, is the town of Woo-sung, built on a river of the same name, which flows into the estuary. On the 16th of June, the British were before Woo-sung, and found the entrance of the river defended merely by long unflanked ramparts along the water's edge. The guns of the Chinese were better served than usual, but after a mutual cannonade of two hours, the seamen and marines landed, and before the troops could be debarked, drove the defenders from the works with the loss of only two men. On the evening of the same day, a reinforcement

of two thousand five hundred men arrived from India; and a portion of this force was employed in the reduction of Shanghae, a city further up the Woo-sung river. This cost only a broadside or two from the ships; and the portion of the troops which marched along the bank, so far from meeting any obstruction, had their guns dragged by the Chinese peasantry. This city, notwithstanding, suffered much from plunder; and on the withdrawal of the troops, before legitimate authority could be re-established, was in all probability completely gutted by the populace. Indeed, if the British troops, on this or other occasions, had any qualms of conscience at all, they were neutralized by the consideration that abstinence on their part would not have the slightest effect in saving the property they coveted.

On the 23rd of June, the detachment returned to Woo-sung, where there were now mustered nine thousand bayonets as well as a considerable force of marines, destined to ascend the Yang-tse-kiang to the ancient capital of China, Nan-king. The fleet consisted of ten men of war, five armed troop ships, two armed surveying vessels, five steam frigates, and three thousand tons of transports. The fact of so great a naval armament proceeding to an inland war is startling to the European imagination; but for seventy miles from Woo-sung the current is neutralized by the tide. Much higher up the grand canal crosses the Yang-tse-kiang, and consequently the city of Chin-keang-foo, at the confluence, commands a great part of the inland trade, and has, therefore, to a considerable extent, the destinies of the empire in its keeping.

The country along the river and around the town was one mass of verdure, swelling here and there into picturesque hills, and sinking into quiet vales interspersed

with cottages, small villas, and solitary temples. It was a region of rural peace, guaranteed at the confluence of the river and canal by trading industry: but on this day there was over all the muteness and immobility of death. The thousand native craft lay idly at anchor; the plough was left in the deserted field; the cottage door was shut; not a peasant was seen on the shore; not a sentry on the walls. But the tranquillity was too profound to inspire confidence, and the silence resembled that of one who holds his breath. The invaders, therefore, disembarked with the same precautions as if the enemy was in view, but with the deliberation his absence permitted; so that their long and regular lines, their gay uniforms and polished accoutrements, their arms flashing in the morning sun, their colours fluttering in the gentle breeze, and their slow and measured tread, as the calm word of command sounded from rank to rank, gave the idea of a military review.

They were divided into three brigades, one of which was to attack a line of encampments visible on the heights at a distance of five or six miles, while the other two were to deal with the devoted city. The first executed its task with great ease so far as the enemy were concerned, who, after firing a few volleys, disappeared over the hills so utterly that they escaped even the usual bloody pursuit of the English; but the latter suffered severely from the increasing heat of the sun, which compelled them, after several men had been destroyed by coups de soleil, to take refuge in a village. Of the second and third brigades, one was to storm the western gate, while the other created a diversion by feigning an attack on the eastern face, and the eventual success of the invaders was owing to their plan being *discovered* by the still silent and invisible, but watchful garrison. The

attention of the Chinese was chiefly given to the motions of the third brigade, on which the real business of the day was intended to devolve; and so well did their guns now break the enchanted repose of the scene, that before the explosion party could reach the gates, the deadly glare of noon added horror to the work.

The second brigade, in the mean time, when it appeared that notwithstanding their having been allowed to land unopposed, the city was actually defended by a determined garrison, began to create as serious a diversion as they could accomplish. Presently, however, their feint was turned into reality; for the nature of the ground permitting ladders to be brought to the foot of the walls with little observation, they considered that they could render more efficient assistance to their comrades within than without, and at once determined to enter by escalade. This plan, which ought never to be successful but through surprise, met with no opposition from the gallant but ignorant Tartars, and very soon the fight was hot within the walls, and a gate opened by the forlorn hope for the admission of the rest of the besiegers. The garrison consisted of two thousand three hundred desperate and devoted men fighting for their homes and children; but the greater part of these were at the western gate a mile and a quarter distant, and the rest, although performing prodigies of valour, were compelled to yield ground, inch after inch, before the terrible strangers. In order to convey an adequate idea of the obstinate and deadly strife, it is only necessary to say that the British were three hours in forcing their passage from gate to gate; but at length they reached the western entrance just in time to see its heavy doors blown in by the third squadron, and the stormers bounding like demons into the gateway

through the smoke and flame, followed by the calm, stern, and serried ranks of the veteran grenadiers.

The explosion seemed to hush all pettier sounds, and there was again a deep ominous silence in the devoted city. This continued for a considerable interval: an interval that was afterwards filled up by white lips and shuddering imaginations. But it was at length over, loaded as it was with horror—accursed of God and man; and they who could tell the signs of Tartar despair hailed the renewed fire of the enemy as a relief. This was the last rally of the garrison in a body, the object of which was not victory but death; and those who were disappointed continued to rise against the victors here and there in small bodies throughout the entire night.

There may be some who will question our taste in copying the following revolting picture from an eye-witness of the state of the city the next day; but the page will be read in the most warlike country in the world—and it will do good! "Frightful were the scenes witnessed among the houses and enclosures of the city, as group after group of whole families lying stiffened in their blood, within their own homestead, were discovered in the streets occupied by the Tartar troops and mandarins, so numerous and so painfully interesting in their revolting details, as to impress with deep and lasting horror all who witnessed this happily rare example of the miseries and ferocities of war. The bodies of most of the hapless little children who had fallen sacrifices to the enthusiasm and mad despair of their parents were found lying within the houses, and usually in the chambers of the women, as if each father had assembled the whole of his family before consummating the dreadful massacre; but many corpses of boys were lying in the streets, amongst those

of horses and soldiers, as if an alarm had spread, and they had been stabbed while they had been attempting to escape from their ruthless parents. In a few instances, these poor little sufferers were found the morning after the assault, still breathing, the tide of life ebbing slowly away, as they lay writhing in the agony of a broken spine, a mode of destruction so cruel that, but for the most certain evidence of its reality, would not be believed. In one of the houses the bodies of seven dead and dying persons were found in one room, forming a group which for loathsome horror was perhaps unequalled. The house was evidently the abode of a man of some rank and consideration, and the delicate forms and features of the sufferers denoted them as belonging to the higher order of Tartars. On the floor, essaying in vain to put food with a spoon into the mouths of two young children extended on a mattress, writhing in the agonies of death, caused by the dislocation of their spines, sat an old decrepit man, weeping bitterly as he listened to the piteous moans and convulsive breathings of the poor infants, while his eye wandered over the ghastly relics of mortality around him. On a bed, near the dying children, lay the body of a beautiful young woman, her limbs and apparel arranged as if in sleep. She was cold, and had been long dead. One arm clasped her neck, over which a silk scarf was thrown, to conceal the gash in her throat which had destroyed her life. Near her lay the corpse of a woman somewhat more advanced in years, stretched on a silk coverlet, her features distorted, and her eyes open and fixed, as if she had died by poison or strangulation. There was no wound upon the body, nor any blood upon her person or clothes. A dead child, stabbed through the neck, lay near her; and in the narrow verandah, adjoining the

room, were the corpses of two more women, suspended from the rafters by twisted cloths wound round their necks. They were both young,—one quite a girl—and her features, in spite of the hideous distortion produced by the mode of her death, retained traces of their original beauty sufficient to show the lovely mould in which they had been cast. From the old man, who appeared by his humble garb to have been a servant or retainer of the family thus awfully swept away, nothing could be elicited as to the mode or authors of their death,—nothing but unintelligible signs of poignant distress. He was made to comprehend the object of the interring party, and at once testified the utmost satisfaction and gratitude for their humane interposition, assisting to carry the bodies down the staircase into the court, where a shallow grave having been excavated beneath the pavement, he tenderly placed them in their sad resting-place, and having covered them with clothes, the stone slabs were replaced over their remains. The two dying children shortly afterwards breathed their last, and were interred beside the grave of their hapless relatives. The old man returned into the now silent abode of his lost chief, and was seen no more."

To this picture we have only to add, that when the Tartar general saw that all was lost, he retired to a small room in his house, seated himself in a chair in calm and brave despair, with his official papers before him and a pile of wood around, and then dismissing his secretary set fire to the pile with his own hands, and allowed himself to perish in the flames. The total loss of the garrison, in killed, is estimated at one thousand; while the British lost four officers killed and eleven wounded, and one hundred and fifty-four men, including both services, killed and wounded. The fate

of the city was similar to that of Chapoo; soldiers, sailors, and camp-followers; Europeans, Indians, and Chinese—all leagueing for its destruction. A lawless covetousness seemed to have taken possession of every breast, which was not less hideous for the wild and reckless gaiety of the marauders. In some quarters the dead were left unburied, till they poisoned the atmosphere around; conflicts repeatedly took place between rival gangs of desperadoes; and in the night-time ruinous conflagrations occurred, which, instead of scaring the country around, had only the effect of summoning the villagers in troops to the spoil.

But the confluence of the Yang-tse-kiang and the canal was now in the hands of the British; the supplies were cut off from the capital; the empire was severed in twain; and the government was at length struck with consternation and despair. The celestial emperor offered to treat; but Sir Henry Pottinger replied that he already knew the terms, and that her Majesty's forces would not halt till he was convinced by the sign manual that a treaty was to be formed on their basis. The squadron accordingly proceeded up the river to Nanking, and arrived off the walls of that ancient capital on the 5th of August, when preparations were made for the attack, the same as if no negotiations were on the tapis at all. This firmness had its effect, the treaty was proceeded with in earnest, and on the 29th of August, 1842, the following articles were signed:—

I. Lasting peace and friendship between the two empires.

II. China to pay twenty-one million dollars in the course of the present and three succeeding years.

III. The ports of Canton, Amoy, Foo-chow-foo, Ning-po, and Shanghai, to be thrown open to British mer-

chants; consular officers to be appointed to reside at them; and regular and just tariffs of import and export (as well as inland transit) duties to be established and published.

IV. The island of Hong Kong to be ceded in perpetuity to her Britannic Majesty, her heirs and successors.

V. All subjects of her Britannic Majesty (whether natives of Europe or India) who may be confined in any part of the Chinese empire to be unconditionally released.

VI. An act of full and entire amnesty to be published by the Emperor, under his imperial sign manual and seal to all Chinese subjects, on account of their having held service or intercourse with, or resided under, the British Government or its officers.

VII. Correspondence to be conducted on terms of perfect equality among the officers of both Governments.

VIII. On the Emperor's assent being received to this treaty, and the payment of the first instalment, six million dollars, her Britannic Majesty's forces to retire from Nanking and the Grand Canal, and the military posts at Chinhae to be also withdrawn, but the islands of Chusan and Kolang-soo to be held until the money-payments and the arrangements for opening the ports be completed.

Such were the fortunes and results of the Opium War, which a thousand years hence will still remain one of the great landmarks of history. The few details we have given exhibit in a striking point of view the singular audacity of British troops; an audacity not arising, like that of the equally intrepid Tartars, from mere animal courage, but from a devout faith in the prodigious machine of which every soldier is conscious of forming an integral part. In a body of imperfect organization, the parts act for themselves, and all depends upon individual skill and valour or popular impulse; but in the

British army, the squadron, the division, the troop, the company, the men—all give themselves up to their assigned duty in the absolute certainty of support. It is this universal feeling of identity, this implicit confidence in each other, which gives success to a high and heroical valour that would otherwise have more effect in warming the imagination than in influencing the destinies of mankind. But the hideous atrocities of the British troops are altogether unsusceptible of excuse, unless the blame be transferred from the individuals who perpetrated them to the system of which they were the blind and fatal instruments. The fact that War converts men for the time into demons cannot be more strikingly illustrated than by the habitual massacres of fugitives committed by an army that was never exposed to the smallest chance of defeat, and whose losses compared with that of the enemy were not as one to five hundred. Still these very massacres were merciful in their effect. The survivors of a Chinese force that had once been subjected to them never rallied; one after one the armies of the empire vanished from the field no more to return; and a war which might otherwise have desolated the country for many years, was brought to a close, as intercepted despatches testify, by the absolute want of soldiers to maintain it. The reprisals of the Chinese, it may be added, were limited by their weakness and their fears, except in one memorable instance which occurred after the slaughter of the Tartars at Cha-poo. This was the public execution at Formosa of three hundred British subjects who had been shipwrecked on that island.

On the return of the expedition to Hong-Kong it found already a thriving colony where it had left only a fishing hamlet; and on the 22nd of July, 1843, Sir Henry Pottinger concluded a commercial treaty which

placed the trade, as regards duties and other regulations, on a permanent footing. A subsidiary treaty, however, dated in October, and securing to ALL nations the same privileges which the English had extorted for themselves, must be considered the crowning glory of the work; and it makes us feel, when turning a retrospective glance upon the guilt, meanness, and folly which at one time characterised the intercourse of Europe with China, that we have abundant reason to be satisfied with the present age, and proud of that noble country which is at the head of its greatness and civilization.

Since the date of these treaties there have been no events sufficiently important for an abstract of history like the present. It cannot be supposed that the elements of disorder subsided at once, or that the stream of commerce flowed without interruption into its appointed channels; but upon the whole the new regime has worked well—although certainly without the splendid and immediate results which some anticipated. Time is required for the operation of change in China. The forms of her civilization have been elaborated by many ages, and must be fused or broken before they can be recast in new models. At this moment we are only at the commencement of a revolution, of which Posterity will see the result and reap the benefit.

CHAPTER V.

THE JAPAN ISLANDS.

Upwards of two hundred miles east of the peninsula of Corea, and between five and six hundred from the nearest part of China, there lies a country consisting of three thousand eight hundred and fifty islands, islets, and rocks, which, although not at present in connection of any kind with Great Britain, we must not pass altogether without mention. If China is reckoned a mystery by the Europeans, Japan is a mystery even to the Chinese. Both these nations are obviously of Tartar origin, and numerous resemblances even in customs and manners attest that they were either originally the same tribe, or that the one has derived the materials of its civilization from the other; and yet no two countries can be more generally dissimilar both in the form of the government and the genius of the people.

In Japan the emperor is not merely the "holy lord" who regards it as no robbery to assert equality with the

Heavens and the Earth: he is too holy to condescend even to govern except in religious things; and the only way in which he maintains the stability and tranquillity of his realm is by sitting immoveable for a certain number of hours every day upon his throne, taking care not to turn his head lest the part of the empire deprived of his glance should wither, or the part subjected to its intensity be ruined. He must never touch the earth with his foot; for what he touches becomes so holy that it is ever after unfit for mere mortals. For this reason his raiment, the food that has been upon his table, the utensils that have cooked it, anything—everything—he has sanctified must be destroyed; and this work of destruction and renovation goes on without ceasing, since nothing can be applied for his use a second time. His visitors are not men but gods or canonized saints, and these are admitted to his presence but for one month in the year, during which period the temples are deserted by the people, since the only mediators through whom they dare approach the Almighty are absent.

But, notwithstanding all this extravagance, the Japanese religion is purity itself compared with the absurd superstitions of the Chinese. They believe in a supreme deity, whom they call the sun-goddess, too holy to be approached in prayer except by the saints and the emperor; and in the immortality of the soul, and the doctrine of future rewards and punishments; and the only emblem used in their devotions is a mirror, the typification of purity. Abstinence from whatever defiles either the soul or the body is with them the law and the prophets; and notwithstanding their observances in this respect in eating and otherwise (as strict and complicated as those of the ancient Jews), they are for ever crying out "Unclean! unclean!" The period of this impurity

does not extend merely "until the even," but must be filled up with fasting and prayer, and during this time the unclean must "touch no hallowed thing nor come into the sanctuary," and his head must be covered from the beams of the holy sun. The death of a near relation is as troublesome in this respect as was the birth of a child to the mothers of Israel; and it is not till the period of uncleanness is over that the mourner, laying aside his white dress, may return into society. Next to the state religion is the universal Buddhism, but blended with Japanese faith; and for the learned and philosophical there is a sort of Confucianism entirely unconnected with mythology.

The first absolute emperor is supposed by Klaproth to have been a Chinese warrior, who commenced his reign in Japan in the year 660 before Christ; and it may be conjectured that the extraordinary system he contrived, pressing as stringently upon the sovereign as upon the people, was intended more for his successors than for himself. These successors, however, were "to the manner born," and eschewing the active toils of royalty, sank gradually into mere puppets, many of them throwing off their irksome dignity by a legal abdication in favour of their children. The result, in a country divided among feudal princes, may be easily imagined; and in the confusion of civil war, the most powerful or least scrupulous of these princes, seizing the opportunity of a long minority, assumed the temporal authority as something too mean for so sacred a personage as his superior. This new office became hereditary; and at the present day, the emperor of Japan, acknowledged to be such by his subjects, the successor and representative of the gods, and the nominal proprietor of the whole realm, is little more than a high priest or pontiff.

But the line of viceroys was not more fortunate as regards the permanence of their power; for the very means adopted to establish a hereditary right, assisted perhaps by the degeneracy so customary in the east of the reigning race, served to abridge, or rather, neutralize it. The great families which assisted in the usurpation remained hereditary councillors and governors, and exercised their duties so vigilantly that abdication was resorted to as commonly by the viceroys as by the emperors, till at length the former became merely portions of the pageantry of the state. It might be thought from this account that the Japanese government is an oligarchy; but it is no more so than it is a despotism. It is the business of the viceroy to watch the emperor, and of the great princes to watch the viceroy; but it is likewise the business of all individually to watch the whole of the rest, and this preserves a balance of power which is one of the most extraordinary phenomena in this extraordinary state. We call it extraordinary, because nothing can be more unstable in the history of other nations than such a balance. In Japan, however, the people, from the highest to the lowest, are governed by conventional laws still stricter than those of the Chinese; every man has his own place, his own rights, his own duties; even the commonest ceremonial of society is matter of prescription; and thus the universal system of espionage acts as a pure and true conservatism. In China a modification of the same system acts for good or evil according to circumstances; but in Japan it appears to preserve the nation in freedom from everything but the despotism of law and custom.

The council of state transacts the whole business of the kingdom; and even if the viceroy should at any time start from his apathy and place his veto upon one of their

decrees, this does not necessarily neutralize it. The matter is referred to arbitration; and the monarch, if unsuccessful, abdicates his throne and retires to private life; while if the council is in that predicament, its chief, and sometimes the whole body, commit suicide in the customary mode—ripping up the abdomen.

The original number of principalities was sixty-eight, all holding of the emperor; but these have been broken up by the jealousy of the government into six hundred and four distinct administrations, part holding of the emperor, and part of the viceroy. Each prince is a sovereign nominally as absolute as the viceroy, but like him a puppet so strictly enchained by the fetters of ceremony that he is frequently glad to throw them off by means of abdication. His family resides at the capital Yedo, and it is only in his periodical visits that he can enjoy their society. At home in his principality, his whole time is consumed in state ceremonies imposed by the nationa council, while his affairs are managed by a secretary who receives his orders from another secretary residing a Yedo under the observation of the council. The reigning prisoner is not suffered to reside in his dominions but at those times when the neighbouring potentates are absent from theirs; but he is encouraged to vie with them in every kind of magnificence and expense, and if not reduced by the process to a safe degree of poverty, he is either presented with the investiture of an office at the imperial court, or else the viceroy invites himself to dine with his vassal: either of which honours is quite sufficient to ruin him.

The governors of the provinces and towns retained as imperial domains are in the same condition as the princes; and after these come a series of functionaries, each under each, and all restricted alike. But even this complicated

machinery is not enough; for the people it is meant to control are themselves classed in subdivisions of five houses, the heads of which are answerable for each other, and bound to report to the police in any case fit for their cognizance. In addition to the regular spies, therefore, employed officially by the emperor, the viceroy, the counsellors, the princes, the nobles—in short by all in authority—the whole population is made to act as spies upon each other. So perfect is the system of surveillance that it is not possible to preserve anything like personal mystery in Japan. A man cannot remove from one street or one village to another, without a certificate of good conduct from his old, and formal permission to reside among them from his new neighbours. This publicity is of course unfavourable to the growth or existence of the usual crime of civilized countries, and it is said that robbery, for instance, is almost unknown.

After the princes in rank come the nobles, holding of them by a feudal tenure similar to their own. Like the mandarins of China, they are compelled to visit the capital once a year, and when there they must live in a degree of splendour sufficient to keep them in poverty. The priesthood comes next; and then the military retainers of the nobles, who constitute in themselves, or their vassals, the Japanese army. These four classes are the higher orders, and are distinguished by their dress and by the privilege of wearing two swords. The fifth class comprises inferior officials and medical men who are permitted to wear one sword; the sixth, merchants and the greater shopkeepers, who are allowed no sword nor ostentation of any kind, but are at liberty, instead, to wax wealthy and enjoy all the comforts and luxuries from which their superiors are debarred; the seventh is composed of petty shopkeepers, mechanics, artists, and artizans; and

the eighth of the cultivators of the soil, who are in fact in the position of the villeins of feudal Europe. In addition to these, the regular orders of the people, there is a pariah caste answering closely to the flayers of Germany, which consists of tanners, curriers, &c., who live secluded in villages of their own, and are not permitted to enter towns, but to discharge the functions of executioners.

The criminal laws of the Japanese are severe and sanguinary, but the perfect system of espionage renders their execution just. Punishment, however, does not always follow crime, for, except as regards offences against the state, the injured party or his friends may prosecute or not at pleasure; and a peculiarity termed *nayboen* interposes a legal fiction between the people and the law. When the award of capital punishment, for instance, is sure to follow an accusation, as the public execution of the sentence would involve confiscation of property and disgrace to the family, the criminal is sometimes either secretly supplied with a weapon to rip himself up, or in applying the torture the operation is so managed as to prove fatal: in either of which cases he is presumed to be innocent, having died before conviction. This would seem to point to a change which must have taken place in the character of the nation, when the severe laws of a conqueror, promulgated in strife and revolution, became no longer applicable; but, like most other innovations, it insensibly extended its sphere, till at the present day almost anything may be done nayboen, which does not involve danger to the government or injustice to the people.

The author of "Manners and Customs of the Japanese," to whose careful and elegant volume, founded on the works of the Dutch and German visitors of the islands,

we owe nearly all the little that is known to the general reader in England on the subject, remarks that "the position of Japanese women seems to constitute a sort of intermediate link between their European and Asiatic conditions." In fact, if we can imagine English or French women, enjoying as usual their personal liberty, mingling with the men in their recreations, and adorning society by their charms and accomplishments,—and yet held in Asiatic tutelage by their husbands and male relations, deprived of legal rights, subjected to the almost unlimited power of divorce without the privilege of demanding it themselves under any circumstances, and compelled to receive into their houses as many mistresses as their husbands please, while the least infringement of chastity on their own part is punished with instantaneous death,—we shall be able to form a tolerably distinct idea of the position of the fair sex in Japan. A Japanese lady, however, is not exactly as the author alluded to says, "a mere toy for her husband's recreation." The alliance between the sexes is not only sensual, but sentimental and intellectual. Women are poets, novelists, historians: but they are not merchants nor politicians. The management of the household is considered enough for them in the way of business, and they are excluded even from a knowledge of the coarser cares that worry the male existence; so that when a man retires wearied and harassed into the bosom of his family or of polite society, he leaves the world and its vexations behind him. But female chastity does not appear to be valued for itself, but merely as something necessary to the honour of the husband and the family. The Aspasias of the old European world may be found in thousands in the tea-houses of Japan; and husbands take pleasure in bringing thither their wives to enjoy the singing, dancing, and conversation of the highly educated and accom-

plished women. This solitary fact is not surprising in a state of society where domestic mistresses, to any number, reside publicly in the same house with the wife; but the extraordinary circumstance is, that, among a people who stickle so much for conjugal purity on one side, a retired Aspasia retains no reproach on account of the profession she has relinquished, but is estimated in society according to her subsequent conduct.

Education may be said to form the whole framework of Japanese society. Every individual of the entire population is educated, at least to the extent of reading and writing, and the acquisition of some knowledge of the history of their own country; but all children above those of the lower orders go through a regular course for many years of morals, manners, and ceremonies, from the minutest form of etiquette up to the performance of the hara-kiri, or process of committing suicide by ripping up the abdomen. Girls, in addition to literary and ceremonial instruction, receive lessons in sewing, in all kinds of useful and ornamental work, and in household duties. At fifteen the education is complete; the youth receives a new name (which indeed he does on every important epoch of his life); his head is shaved; he has ceased to be a boy, and he casts his eyes round in quest of a wife.

The nuptial presents, which almost everywhere else in the east are the true purchase-money of the bride, are here sent to the lady herself, who bestows them upon her parents; and they in turn, as if still further to preserve appearances of pride and delicacy, furnish her trousseau, consisting principally of a spinning-wheel, a loom, and some culinary utensils. They having previously burned with much ceremony her childish toys, to indicate that she is about to enter upon the stern realities of life, and

now, on sending her forth in procession to the bridegroom's house, they wrap round her dress of virgin white a *winding-sheet*, in which she is married, and in which she is destined eventually to descend into the grave! An analogous custom, strange to say, prevails on the banks of the Seine, which we have thus alluded to on another occasion:—"In the same spirit of a wise and grave philosophy the bride is married in a *mourning gown*. The girl is dead, and all her happy headless dreams departed. It is the woman who now comes upon the scene, mourning for the past, and looking forward in fear or faith to the future; it is the heiress of the curse of Eve, who, lovely in her grief and smiling through her tears, now enters upon her fatal inheritance."* All is gaiety, however, in the Japanese procession, which parades through the town, the men in dresses of ceremony, and those of the women glittering with gold embroidery; and all is gaiety in the bridegroom's house, where the bridesmaids, assuming the names of male and female butterflies, flutter through the thousand ceremonies of presenting and drinking sakee, in which the marriage form consists: but the wedding feast which crowns the day is severely simple, either to tame down the joyous spirit of the time with "the pale cast of thought," or, as some say, to commemorate the frugality of the ancestors of their people.

The house in which the young couple are domiciled is in all probability their own—supposing them to belong to the better classes; for the thraldom of the princes and nobles descends far below their own rank, and men even of the middle orders are glad to lay aside the burthen with the dignity of being the head of a family. But the son is not unwilling to take his father's place, and become

* "Wanderings by the Seine."

the sire of the old gentleman himself, for troubles and difficulties appear like positive enjoyments to the imagination of high-hearted and generous youth. For a time, indeed, he has perhaps little complaint to make, for his chains are gilded with pomp and garlanded with pleasures. He belongs to some department or other of the government; but as three-fourths at least of the entire population do so likewise, his share of labour is very light indeed. His life seems to pass in a round of enjoyments, or at least such part of it as is not frittered away in idle but necessary ceremonies; of which the most onerous are writing notes and making presents, although the mere occupation of bowing—as much matter of prescription as the rest—would seem in any other country (with the exception of China) to be business enough in itself.

Morning calls are still more common than in London or Paris; but the hospitality that has become unfashionable in those of Europe is indispensable in Japan, where tea and pipes are presented, and at last a paper of confectionary, which the guest, if he cannot eat it, deposits in his sleeve. This is practised even at dinners and other great entertainments. In England the confectioner who furnishes a supper collects what is left to form part of another supper; but at Japanese feasts the preparations are made for the actual guests, and a man who goes out to dinner is bound in politeness to let his servant come with a basket to carry off the fragments. Venison, poultry, fish, and vegetables (for beef is not eaten), are the staple of the dinner, the birds having sometimes their beak and claws gilded, like the pheasants of medieval Europe; but the entertainers pique themselves most on the display they can make of their table service in China and Japanned ware.

Besides dinners, there are grand tea-drinkings, in which the infused herb is the only refreshment, but served with a pomp and paraphernalia which give ample scope for the ostentation of the host. Although the furniture is very scanty, the carpet serving for chair, table, sofa, and bed in one, still there is infinite art in its management. In the drawing-room there is a recess which contains a single picture and a vase of flowers, and these must be constantly changed to suit the particular occasion. At such parties the ladies amuse themselves with ornamental work, or else with music and dancing, of which the former is, like the Chinese, unintelligible to European ears, but the latter a not ungraceful pantomime, in which the legs, concealed by their wide dresses, have the least to do. Chess and draughts are the sedentary games; but when forfeits are introduced, the polite, dignified, and gorgeously-dressed company throw ceremony out of window, become rank philosophers on a sudden, and play with might and main like so many boys and girls. The penalties imposed upon the men are chiefly the bibation of a cup of sakee, and they are occasionally so virtuous and so valiant in their submission to the law of the game, that the proud and temperate orientals are carried off by the servants like so many baskets of leavings.

The Japanese are passionate admirers of fine scenery, and among their recreations the most esteemed are rural excursions and water parties. No country in the world is richer in the beauties of nature, and in Japan even the roads are made to add to the picturesque, being carried in flights of steps over the hills. The rivers, the lakes, the innumerable bays of the coast, are thronged with gilded barges, which lie mute and motionless under some shady bank during the heat of the day, but when the

bland evening comes shoot like stars through the water, tracked by many-coloured lanterns and the silvery laugh and buoyant songs of women. In towns there is the theatre as another resource; but the Japanese drama is after a model so different from that of Europe, that the Dutch visitors could comprehend little beyond the boxes, pit, and stage which reminded them of home. The female parts are sustained by boys; and three pieces are frequently played in the course of the same performance, not successively, but in alternate acts: a plan for ensuring *variety* which is worth the consideration of our minor theatres. A Japanese play-goer may thus amuse himself with a walk or anything else between whiles, and return when the interrupted thread of the drama he wishes to see is resumed. As for the ladies they are well satisfied to remain in the boxes during the whole of the afternoon and evening, as they are themselves an important part of the spectacle. They are accompanied by their female servants loaded with dresses, and pass the time in the cruel sport of trying the effect of their whole wardrobe upon the groundlings.

But the round of amusement as well as that of business has at length an end, and the Japanese dies: but even death is here a form peculiar to the country. Sometimes it is enacted in a temple, the individual ripping himself up publicly as the closing scene of a grand entertainment; sometimes he goes through the ceremony in his own family circle; and occasionally he huddles through it in private as an escape from criminal conviction and dishonour. But although a tragical enough matter for the principal actor, it is often *nayboen* as regards others; for the death is concealed till his creditors are satisfied with the salary of the defunct, or the reversion of his place has been secured for his son. When at length it is

quite convenient to announce that the man is dead—whether he has died by suicide or in the common course of nature—the furniture of the house is turned upside down, and the clothes of its inhabitants inside out; a priest takes his place by the corpse; and the friends come to see that all is properly ordered, the family being supposed to be incapacitated by grief from attending to anything whatever. One of them remains outside the door in a dress of ceremony to receive visits of condolence, since no one but an intimate friend will incur the impurity of entering the house of death.

In former times the house of the deceased was burnt, after his monument had been constructed from its materials, but at present it is considered sufficient to kindle a fire before it and throw oils, perfumes, and spices into the flames. In like manner the custom of burying servants with their masters (in the earlier epochs alive) has fallen into desuetude, and effigies are substituted; just as the simple habits of the ancient Japanese are represented by their luxurious descendants by the introduction of a piece of coarse salt fish even at the most sumptuous meals. The body is placed in a sitting posture in a coffin resembling a tub, enclosed in an earthenware vessel, and the procession is preceded, as in Russia, by torch bearers; and after the male portion of the family in white, surrounded by the friends in dresses of ceremony, come the ladies and the female friends in palanquins. A funeral service is performed at the interment, and the corpse sinks into a well-like grave to the sound of a kind of cymbal.

The Japanese language, though at one time supposed to be a mere dialect of the Chinese, is now understood to be so completely dissimilar as to show that the nation is a distinct race, and not a colony of the Celestial Empire. The Chinese character, however, is used in works of

science and public documents; although for the commoner productions of literature, they have no fewer than three different alphabets of their own. Besides works of science, Japanese literature comprises history, biography, geography, travels, moral philosophy, natural history, poetry, the drama, and encyclopædias; but such portions of them as have become known in Europe, through the Dutch translations, would seem to throw much doubt upon the correctness of the favourable opinion pronounced by the translators themselves. Ballads, romances, and songs compose the greater part of the poetry; and of these two or three versions have been made in Dutch, which show that the grand staple is the same in Japan as elsewhere. The following copy of verses, to which we have merely added an expletive here and there to fill out the rhyme, would not look like an exotic in an English annual.

To hear thy deep but gentle voice,
Thy calm and radiant brow to see,
O! how it would my heart rejoice!
But that is too much bliss for me.

One look of thine by others known
To thrill me to my bosom's core,—
One word not heard by me alone,
And I were lost for evermore!

Such sentiments, it may be remarked, are not necessarily those of a wife wavering in her fidelity; for the horror in which a mésalliance is regarded by the heads of families is in itself, without the aid of guilt, productive enough of the romantic to suit the purposes of poetry.

The only sciences cultivated with success in Japan are medicine and astronomy, although the progress of the former is retarded by superstition, and more especially

the religious prejudices respecting the pollution supposed to be incurred by the contact with death. In astronomy, on the contrary, the path is clear; and, having none of the absurd self-sufficiency of the Chinese, the Japanese are already acquainted with most of the European instruments, and in imitation of them manufacture telescopes, thermometers, and barometers. Their knowledge of mathematics is limited; and in mechanics, like all half-informed people, they prefer remaining in ignorance of improvements that would have the effect of "throwing artificers out of work." With regard to the fine arts, they appear to be in pretty nearly the same state of advancement as the Chinese; but this must be said with the exception of architecture, of which, as an art, the Japanese are profoundly ignorant.

In metallurgy they are skilful, and more especially in the art of tempering steel, which enables them to manufacture swords of so exquisite an edge, as to sever an iron nail without sustaining injury. Some of these blades are valued at a hundred pounds, while others are regarded as articles of curiosity beyond all price. Their lacker work is superior to that of the Chinese, but the best specimens have never been brought to Europe; their porcelain is said to have degenerated, owing to the supply of fine clay having fallen off; and their silk stuffs, the best qualities of which are manufactured by high born criminals, confined on a rocky island, are very beautiful, although the silk itself is supposed to be inferior to the Chinese.

The rice of Japan is reckoned the best in Asia, and is the principal vegetable food of the people, barley being used for feeding cattle, and wheat for cakes, and in the manufacture of soy. Next to rice, as an object of cultivation, is tea, which is not merely grown in planta-

tions throughout the country, for sale, but in every hedge for the consumption of the owner's family. The mountains are rich in gold, silver, iron, copper, and sulphur; which articles, together with camphor, ambergris, tea, rice, soy, wrought silks, lackered ware, and earthenware, form the commercial exports of the country.

The precious metals were so plenty and so cheap when the Europeans first visited Japan, that they constituted for a considerable time the principal articles of exportation. It is stated by Kæmpfer that the Portuguese at one time exported gold to the incredible amount of two millions and a half sterling; but at any rate the fact is certain that, in 1636 and 1637, the exports in silver amounted to three-quarters of a million each year. At the same time the Dutch were draining the country of half a million annually in gold, which increased in 1641 to 700,000*l.* By the end of the century, however, all this was at an end, owing either to the increasing difficulty of working the mines, or to the government having caught the alarm; and in 1700, the national coin was debased in value thirty-seven per centum. Copper was supplied to the Dutch at a price far below its intrinsic value, and for a time in an unlimited quantity; while iron, on the contrary, was dearer than that metal, but of the finest quality in the world.

When the supply of copper was limited, camphor took its place as an article of commerce, and both Europe and China were chiefly supplied by Japan. The English market now, however, mainly depends upon China, while the production of Japan is imported only to the extent of about five hundred peculs, by way of Batavia. Both Chinese and Japanese give enormous prices for the camphor of the Archipelago, which is not known in Europe at all.

Although tea was at one time an article of Dutch

export, it is inferior to that of China; and although the infusion is universally drunk in Japan, the finer qualities are imported from the former country. It is curious to observe that the Chinese supply their neighbours, the Japanese, with green tea, just as they do their European customers, while they restrict themselves to the use of black tea.

The imports are sugar, the cane not being cultivated in Japan; raw silk, of a better quality than their own, and wrought silks of a cheaper and coarser quality; cotton goods for the dress of the lower orders; woollen manufactures, the trade in which might be pushed to an almost unlimited extent in such a climate, and in a country where the sheep is unknown; glass, hardware, quicksilver, antimony, ore of zinc, cinnabar, amber, coral, pearls, dressed and undressed hides, sandal and sapan wood, camphor of the Archipelago, Chinese tea, coffee, ivory, alum, and spices. Of some of the articles we have mentioned, however, whether exports or imports, it cannot be said that they actually pass current in Japanese commerce, but rather that they might do so. Very little is known even of the little foreign trade that is carried on by these exclusive islanders; and owing, we presume, to the habitual closeness of the Dutch in such matters, the commercial information in the interesting book we have referred to is so scanty, that the inquirer must have recourse to Crawford and other indirect sources.

The commercial intercourse of the Chinese with Japan, though carried on from very ancient times, did not assume any important character till the last Tartarian conquest, when the former people were at least tacitly permitted to engage in foreign trade. They were for some time under no restrictions whatever, but voyaged to and from all parts of the empire at pleasure, to the

number, as stated by Kæmpfer, of two hundred junks annually, with fifty men each; and it is said that many wealthy and profligate Chinese were drawn to Japan solely by the luxuries of the tea-houses, and the charms of the Aspasias. In process of time, however, they were restricted, like other foreigners, to the port of Nagasaki; and at length, by some unlucky casualty, they came to be identified, in the imagination of the authorities, with the schemes of the Europeans, which we are about to notice; and their trade was cut down proportionally with that of the Dutch, till it now amounts only to twelve junks in the year, with cargoes limited to about 112,000*l.* The proximate cause of this severity was the importation of some Christian books, the production of the Jesuits in China. "When this was first found out by the Japanese," we are told in the History of Japan, "they obliged the proprietor of the books to testify in the most solemn nanner that he was not a Christian himself, and that he did not bring over any of these books designedly, and knowing what they were; then to make him more circumspect for the future, they sent him back with his junk and whole cargo, without permitting him to dispose of any part of it." The Chinese at Nagasaki were now placed under the strict surveillance they are still subjected to, and a censorship instituted for the examination of the scientific and theological books they are allowed to import. The junks in the trade are about four hundred tons burthen, and make two of these brief and easy voyages in the year.

In the thirteenth century Marco Polo describes Japan, from Chinese report, as a country of idolaters, "where the people live quite separate, entirely independent of all other nations," and where gold is so plentiful that, for want of an outlet, it is accumulated to a vast amount. This

early isolation has been supposed to have some mysterious connection with the present hermit-like position of Japan; but it is forgotten that the country was at that time at war with the main-land, and that the mariner's compass was unknown. The Venetian's account does not seem to have excited the cupidity of Europe, where spices were considered the only desirable riches of the east, and it was not till 1543 that Japan was accidentally discovered by the Portuguese, from one of their China-men being wrecked on the coast.

The nation had by this time made up its quarrel with the Chinese, and carried on a brisk trade both with the main and all other accessible countries. They were fond of strangers and their new manufactures, and encouraged the Portuguese to settle among them, giving these "southern barbarians" their daughters in marriage. The Jesuit missionaries soon followed, and met with such extraordinary success in their efforts at conversion, that if their zeal had not hurried them into the political troubles of the times, Japan might have been a Christian country at this day. The downfall of the imperial power, however, intervened, and the struggle for the viceroyalty which have been noticed in passing, and unhappily, the Portuguese were leagued with the unsuccessful party. After forty-three years both of religious and commercial triumph, the persecution of Christianity commenced in 1586, and was embittered by the pride and intemperate zeal of the priesthood, and the rapacity of the laity; till, before the close of the century, upwards of twenty thousand Christians, natives and Europeans, had suffered death. This death is termed martyrdom; but it is obvious that there is no such thing as religious intolerance in the Japanese character. The Christians were

destroyed as political enemies, and the crucifix was held up to execration as the badge of the party.

The successful dynasty appears to have been sated with revenge, or else to have felt their power to be secure; for the first thirty-six years of the seventeenth century passed away in peace for the Portuguese. But by this time a new enemy had come upon the scene; and here, as elsewhere, two nations of Christians grappled at each other's throats for the sake of what both are in the habit of terming the "mammon of unrighteousness." The Dutch endeavoured, by means of an intercepted correspondence with Portugal, to get their rivals excluded from the empire; and the result was a proceeding on the part of the Japanese which, both as regards its own singularity and the determination with which it has been carried out for more than two hundred years, is one of the most surprising events in history. They not merely excluded all foreign nations from Japan, but themselves from visiting foreign countries. They shut themselves up in their own islands, where a population of from fifteen to forty-five millions, as it has been variously estimated, remain to this day in a state of isolation which is the wonder of the world. A Portuguese embassy was sent to remonstrate against this curious resolution; but it was received like that of Kublai in the thirteenth century, the members being all put to death with the exception of two, who were permitted to carry the tidings to Macao as a warning. A still more terrible lesson, however, had preceded this. In 1638, the Christians of Japan, now reduced to seventy thousand in number, rose in despair, and concentrated themselves in a fortified place. There they were besieged by the Japanese *and Dutch*, and being overcome, were massacred to the number of forty thousand. Persecution now assumed its most stringent form.

The native Christians were commanded to prove the abjuration of their faith by trampling on the crucifix, and almost universally preferred the alternative of death. Multitudes of them were at length shut up in dungeons, and annually offered wealth and freedom on the same terms: but in vain. Executions continued to take place till 1665, but by degrees the whole of the prisoners died off. The ceremony of trampling on the crucifix became from that time a religious rite of the Japanese, and is performed annually on one of their holy festivals.

The Dutch had been about thirty years in the country, and had been well treated, notwithstanding the edicts they found in force against Christianity. Their conduct, however, to their co-religionists excited the contempt and distrust of the Japanese; and in three years they found themselves restricted to a little island artificially constructed in the harbour of Nagasaki; where they remain to this day, and where the state of surveillance under which they live has no parallel, even in the former degradation of the Europeans at Canton. The trade for which they literally sacrificed both earth and heaven, was rapidly cut down by their scornful hosts, till in 1743 it was confined to one ship, although that is now increased to two, carrying cargoes limited to the aggregate annual value of 75,000*l.*, chiefly in camphor and copper. Even these vessels are received with as many precautions as if they were a powerful fleet. They must deliver up their guns and *bibles*, and those who land on the prison island—where the residents are limited to eleven—must submit to a rigorous search. It may be imagined how annoying the imprisonment is to persons who have this view before them on entering the bay:—

"The bay becomes more animated as we approach the town, and offers on both sides the most delightful variety of

objects. How inviting are the shores, with their peaceful dwellings! What fruitful hills, what majestic temple-groves! How picturesque those green mountain-tops, with their volcanic formations! How luxuriantly do those evergreen oaks, cedars, and laurels clothe the declivity! What activity, what industry, does nature, thus tamed as it were by the hand of man, proclaim! As witness those precipitous walls of rock at whose feet corn-fields and cabbage-gardens are wore in terraces from the steep; witness the coast, whose Cyclopean bulwarks set bounds to the arbitrary caprice of a hostile element."

The prison-house of the Dutch, called Dezima, is connected with the town by a bridge, but all view is intercepted by a wall. No European servant is allowed in the fortress, and native servants must not on any pretext remain on the island after sunset; but this rule does not apply to female attentions, which may be paid at all times by the ladies of the tea-houses—for no other classes of the sex are permitted to visit the Dutch. Even these women are obliged to present themselves to the police at the bridge once in twenty-four hours; a precaution which is perhaps intended to guard against any subject of the emperor being born or dying at Dezima, both of which proceedings are forbidden by law. When we add that the island is six hundred yards long, by two hundred and forty-three in breadth; that it affords only a distant view of the sides of the bay; and that no Japanese boat is permitted to approach it, some notion may be formed of the pleasures of Dutch life in Japan.

Still, even this life has its varieties; for occasionally the petition of a Dutchman to take a walk is granted by the governor after twenty-four hours' consideration; and in this case, attended officially by twenty-five or thirty persons, and conventionally by their friends and acquaint-

ances, all of whom he is bound to entertain,—not to mention an escort consisting of every boy in the quarter big enough to run, shouting "Dutchman! Dutchman!"—he sallies forth on his promenade. The town, with its low neat houses, projecting triangularly into a landscape garden, small or large, according to the circumstances of the proprietors — the lovely country beyond, with its temples crowning every hill, and opening their doors to parties of sinners and saints alike—and finally the tea houses, with their singing and dancing Dalilahs, all are explored, all are enjoyed; and the happy reveller—who, in the course of the day has perhaps been permitted to give his company the slip, and take a solitary ramble *nayboen*—with a sigh of mingled satisfaction and regret, returns to his prison, which he must reach before sunset.

The grand excursion of the Dutch, however, takes place every fourth year, when they proceed in a body to carry their presents to the viceroy at the distant capital Yedo. Their number, including natives, amounts to two hundred; and although the meanest of the princes on a similar journey is attended by a retinue of ten thousand men, the Dutch are treated with as much distinction on the road, in the character of persons actually destined to enter the sublime presence. They see nothing of the country, however, but the customary line of route, and the audience of the viceroy does not occupy *one minute.* But they are amply repaid for their trouble in taking such a journey, by the view of a state of society which might be supposed to exist in the moon, so different is it from European experience. The Japanese appear to be in every respect superior to the Chinese, and their refinement is not only different in kind, but vastly greater in degree. Like the latter, they were originally Tartars, there can be no doubt; but in the course of ages a train

of different circumstances has modified the character both of their minds and persons. So far as exterior goes, they are according to Marco Polo, " fair, handsome, and of agreeable manners," and the Dutch writers, in spite of the Mongol peculiarities of the countenance, are charmed with the beauty of the women. As the Chinese ladies, however, tie up their feet, and the Europeans apply more dangerous and as unnatural ligatures to the waist, so do the fair Japanese bandage their hips so tightly as to turn their feet inwards and give a certain awkwardness to their gait. Their dress consists of several long, loose gowns, worn over each other, those of the higher classes being of silk richly embroidered or trimmed with gold lace. Their hair is dressed in the form of a turban, stuck full of pieces of tortoiseshell exquisitely polished, which are the only trinkets they wear. They use paint in profusion, daubing their cheeks with red and white, and even their lips with what is described as a golden purple; and when married, they blacken their teeth and extirpate their eyebrows. The men wear the same kind of dress, with the addition of a scarf on the shoulder, the length of which determines their rank ; and, on occasions of ceremony, a cloak of a specific form, with a pair of trousers resembling a Dutchman's *small*-clothes, but increased in length and in enormity of latitude. Instead of shaving their heads all but the crown, like the Tartars and Chinese, they shave only the crown and front, and gather the hair of their temples and back of the head into a knot on the top. Hats are not worn by either sex, except as a defence against rain, just as Europeans use umbrellas. The fan, which is in everbody's hand from the beggar to the emperor, screens them from the sun, and serves a multitude of other purposes.

The adventures of the English in Japan may be dismissed very summarily. William Adams, an English shipmaster, being desirous of gaining some knowledge of the Indian trade, engaged himself in 1598, as pilot major to a Dutch fleet of five vessels; which, after many misfortunes at sea, found itself compelled to steer for Japan. This was the first appearance of the Dutch at these famous islands; and, notwithstanding the machinations of the Portuguese, they were received with considerable favour, and Adams himself acquired great personal influence with the viceroy. In 1611, he addressed a letter to the Company's factory at Bantam, to entreat them to take some steps to let his wife and children know of his being alive, and in Japan; where he added, "the people are good of nature, courteous out of measure, and valiant in war. Justice is severely executed upon transgressors without partiality. There is not in the world a land better governed by civil policy." He stated that if his countrymen should think fit to open a trade, it was in his power to procure them a distinguished welcome; although it was not his own opinion that any profit could be expected, unless the intercourse was extended from Japan to China. "Had I known," concluded he, "that our English ships had trade in the Indies, I had long ago troubled you with writing, but the Hollanders kept it such a secret from me till the year 1611, which was the first news I had of our ships trading to the Indies."

This invitation was accepted by the Company, and when Captain Saris arrived in 1613, Adams kept his word so well that through his influence a factory was established, under an edict so preposterously favourable, that the English were not only exempted from import and export duties, but rendered absolutely independent of the laws of the empire; all offences, as we find in Purchas's

Pilgrims, being punishable by their own superintendent, "according to his discretion, and the laws to take no hold of their persons or goods!" Notwithstanding all this, the factory was abandoned after a trial of ten years, on account, it is to be presumed, of the English finding it impracticable to establish an intermediate trade with China, and their having no fabrics of their own fit for the market. Fifty years after this, an attempt to re-establish themselves failed, because their king, Charles II., had married a princess of the detested Portuguese; and in 1681, 1683, and 1689, they were equally unsuccessful.

In 1808, when there was war between the English and Dutch, a cruiser of the former nation sailed into the Bay of Nagasaki, under Dutch colours, upon which some of the imprisoned factors put off joyfully to meet her boat, according to the practice, and were immediately laid hold of and carried on board the ship. The whole coast was in an uproar, which it may be supposed was not diminished when the English frigate, in the midst of the anxious consultation of the Dutch and Japanese functionaries, walked quietly into the harbour without a pilot. Her errand was to look out for the annual ships from Batavia; but finding that they were not arrived, she was satisfied with some provisions and water; and while troops were hurrying from all quarters to the threatened point, and the authorities debating as to the best mode of accomplishing the destruction of the insolent intruder, she sailed quietly out again, and pursued her cruise. Within half an hour of her departure, the governor, and the commandants of some ports that had been found unprepared with troops, ripped themselves up.

Both before and after that year attempts to share in the trade were made by the Americans, and one, partly of a religious and partly of a mercantile character, so late

as 1837, but all in vain. In 1804, the Russians tried their fortune by means of an embassy, but were so scurvily treated, that in two years afterwards they landed on one of the Kurile isles, the dependencies of Japan, and wantonly burnt some villages and carried off several of the natives. The consequence was, that the officer and boat's crew of a frigate on an exploratory voyage in these latitudes, were seized in reprisal by the Japanese, and kept prisoners for two years, till an ample disavowal of the outrage was received from the Russian Court; when the captives were sent home, with a written warning to their countrymen to desist from any further attempts at intercourse between the two nations. Japan to this moment continues to stand upon her guard, and her coasts are not only kept by military, but native interpre-preters, understanding both English and Dutch, are stationed all round.

The principal islands of Japan, Nippon, Kiusiu, and Sikokf, contain about ninety thousand square miles, and are situated within the thirty-first and thirty-sixth degrees of north latitude; but the whole empire, including the Loo-choo islands, in the south, and the Kurile archipelago in the north, extends from the twenty-fourth to the fiftieth degree, and thus comprises within itself the productions both of the tropical and temperate zones. The money of the country, like that of China, is gold, silver, and copper; but in Japan, by a curious contrast, the two former are coined, while copper passes by weight. In Captain Hamilton's time, as he relates, the mercantile honour was so pure, that a trader of eminence might put up any quantity of gold coin in a silk bag fastened with his seal, and it would pass current for the sum inscribed upon it, without being opened, for several generations.

There is a post-office establishment, before the runners

of which, a prince, if he meet them on the road, must give way. By land, merchandise is transported on horses and oxen, but the rivers and lakes afford the principal medium of transit. The vessels are never more than sixty tons burthen; and by way of rendering it impossible for them to break through the rule of national seclusion, their construction is ordered by law in such a manner, that any other than a coasting voyage would be fatal to them.

The Chinese trade, to the small extent to which it is limited, may be considered necessary to a luxurious people like the Japanese; but it is obvious that that of the Dutch can be esteemed by them of no commercial importance whatever. The truth, we believe is, that the latter are, however unconsciously, a part of the spy system; that they are merely retained as agents through whom notice may be received of any movements in the outer world; and that the restricted trade accorded to them is the price of such services. Even setting aside their treatment of their co-religionists, there was nothing in the Dutch mode of doing business to bespeak the favour of a high-spirited people. The insolent extravagance of their demands for their own goods, together with their extreme parsimony in purchasing, at a time when they supposed themselves permanently established in the trade, gave great umbrage to the Japanese government; while the detection of their captains in petty smuggling, excited the contempt and derision of the people. A coat and a pair of breeches of enormous stowage were a part of the standing furniture of the cabin; and when the captain went on shore—the only Dutchman allowed by law to pass without personal search—he was often so heavily laden as to be obliged to lean for support upon two sailors, one at each side. The breeches were first suspected by the government, and abolished, and then the

coat was declared contraband. "It was droll enough," says Thunberg, "to see the astonishment which the sudden reduction in the size of our bulky captain excited in the major part of the ignorant Japanese, who before had always imagined that all our captains were actually as fat and lusty as they appeared to be."

So long as the existing constitution of Japan endures, there appears to be no probability of her being drawn into the common circle of nations; but it is evident enough that the country resembles a charged mine, which a single spark may explode. That spark will perhaps come, if come it will, from some external quarter. The English, from being masters of India, advanced into Malaya, and striding thence towards the east, have now planted a territorial settlement in China. The same nation is founding empires on a continent nearly as large as Europe, not a month's sail by common ships, from Japan. The Russians are the near neighbours of her northern islands in Kamchatka. A great movement is taking place among the Anglo-American race towards their western shores, which are distant only a few weeks' sail, in a direct, uninterrupted line. How many changes have taken place since the Japanese first severed the ties which bound them to the social system of the world! and how many greater changes are in progress!

BOOK IX.

AUSTRALIA, AND THE ISLANDS OF THE PACIFIC.

CHAPTER I.

THE ISLANDS OF THE PACIFIC.

Between Australia, the Indian Archipelago, and the eastern shores of continental Asia on one hand, and the two Americas on the other, there lie a multitude of islands which are all of more or less importance to the commercial fortunes of Great Britain, and some of which are possessions of the British crown.

These chains usually stretch from north to south, with an inclination in the middle of their course from east to west, thus seeming to indicate a regular system of partially submerged mountains; and the loftier islands present indubitable tokens of that volcanic agency which at some early epoch of the globe so utterly changed the face of nature. These vary from two thousand to fifteen thousand feet in elevation, and exhibit traits of mingled beauty and sublimity rarely seen elsewhere in union;

while the lower isles, some only a hundred feet above the water, realize our dreams of paradise, and would really have deserved from the ancient world the name of Islands of the Blest. The sea even in storms, before approaching these ocean-gardens, hushes its roar and glides, as if with calm and fond delight, round their base, exhibiting distinctly through its transparent bosom the most delicate hues of the coral flowers beneath. A girdle of rock, varying in distance, sometimes to the extent of a mile from the sloping beach, explains this seeming miracle, by receiving the shock of the long huge waves of the ocean, which rise up in crests of foam without entering the charmed circle.

The appearance of human beings, growing like animals and plants on groups of islands that are often many hundred miles apart from each other, and several thousand miles from any continent, is perplexing to the imagination. The question as to whether the insular population of the Pacific came from Asia or America has excited much discussion; but the opinion which appears to be best supported by argument is, that both the latter continent and the intermediate islands were peopled from the former. The difficulty, however, as to the prevalence of *easterly* trade-winds is not well surmounted, by supposing the ancestral navigators to have taken advantage of the brief westerly gales to proceed from group to group. This is to conclude that they were acquainted with the position of the land they sought; for it is obvious that a thousand canoes might have drifted by chance from one fixed point in this vast ocean without hitting precisely another. It is enough for us, however, that we here find two races, the Brown and the Black, similar to those we have met with in the Indian Archipelago; and we venture to suggest that the cradle of the latter must be looked for in the Australian continent, the Africa of the eastern world.

There is a sufficient similarity in the character of the different groups inhabited by the brown race to admit of a general sketch. The people were found by the Europeans living in a state of great simplicity, and yet many of their institutions giving token of a much further advanced condition of society. The king in some of the islands was also the pontiff, and resembled closely in his sanctity the emperor of Japan—converting whatever he touched into a thing too sacred for common use.

The Japanese system of abdication, likewise, prevailed; although it took place not at the will of the monarch but by prescription, on the birth of his first-born son, who forthwith became the sovereign, his father sinking into the position of minister. The people were divided into classes: first, the aristocracy or large proprietors; second, the smaller proprietors or middle classes; and third, the common people including the retainers, servants, and slaves of the others. Women were eligible to the throne, and in one respect enjoyed great liberty. Among a simple people, enjoying a heavenly climate, and a soil that yielded almost spontaneously, not only the necessaries but many of the luxuries of life, there were few questions of property to embitter the intercourse of the sexes. Polygamy to any convenient extent was permitted; and the husbands were only offended by what in another state of society would be called the profligacy of their wives when it was practised without their sanction. Thefts were a mere exercise of the ingenuity, only fit to be laughed at or applauded, except by the losers; who were at liberty to recover their property as they could. Public opinion and oral traditions were the only laws, and the latter were handed down in songs which described the manners of their ancestors. In religion they believed in a supreme and eternal Deity who

had manifested himself amidst the gloom of chaos; but beneath this first cause they had gods and intelligences, who were worshipped in the heavenly bodies, and whose voices were heard in the roar of winds and waves. They paid religious respect, likewise, to the spirits of their great men; but these, like the ghosts of the western world, were only invoked by wizards and sorcerers. They also worshipped idols, but far more rationally than any other idolaters in the world; ridiculing the idea that their tools could have invested with any sanctity a log of wood, and regarding it as holy only during the moment when the deity had informed the simulacrum by his presence at the invocation of the priest. Blood, nothwithstanding, flowed on these comparatively pure altars. Human victims were offered up, and the devotees cut off joints of their fingers to appease the wrath of the god. Their heaven was merely an immortality of such pleasures as they enjoyed most below; and the pains of hell consisted in a view of that happiness of which the condemned could never hope to partake.

The Sandwich Islands, the most northerly of the larger groups, and in the direct line from China to Mexico, are distant from the shores of the former country five thousand miles, and from the latter two thousand eight hundred miles. They consist of ten islands, the largest of which is ninety-seven miles long by seventy-eight broad. They were discovered in 1778 by Captain Cook; and were visited eight years after by La Perouse, and subsequently from time to time by various merchant vessels, till in 1792 the expedition of Vancouver found them somewhat advanced in what is called civilization. This means that the simple natives had become discontented with the bits of iron and coarse cloth for which they had been eager at first to exchange their provisions,

and had learned to drink ardent spirits, and pander to certain vices of Europe which had been only harmless instincts with themselves. But some of them also had made voyages to China, to California, to the United States; and thus the people, learning the value of a mercantile navy, set themselves sedulously to steal one, and had actually seized by force an American schooner, and murdered the crew. Their visitors finding them such hopeful scholars, now furnished them with muskets and ammunition, and taught them some of the rules of fortification; and the consequence was that the little wars of the several little kings ended in one great revolution which placed a sovereign, though as yet without absolute security, upon the general throne.

The victor was a man of genius; and, at any rate, it was necessary for him to make friends of foreign nations, and make money by trading with them. His small dominions were of importance to all the world, as a rendezvous in the wide Pacific; and presently they became a considerable depôt both for Chinese and European manufactures, thence re-shipped for Mexico. Vancouver gave him a breed of cattle and sheep, which very soon added to the importance of the islands to the wanderers of the ocean; and sandal wood being found in abundance in their forests, became a staple article for traffic. Surrounded, coaxed, grappled by European policy, this little barbarian state was in a perfect hot-bed of civilization, and grew like a mushroom bedded in manure. The king saw at a glance the meaning of the empressement of his visitors; and in order to protect himself from the designs of the Russians and Americans, ceded to the English that supremacy which as yet was hardly his to give. George III., in token of his disinterested friendship for his brother monarch, presented him with a vessel built at the

new settlement of Port Jackson in Australia; and the Sandwich potentate waxing wealthy, added gradually to his navy by purchasing some brigs and schooners of several hundred tons burthen.

But all this was of little avail so long as the people, while hungering and thirsting after an approximation to the great nations of the west, were kept in by the chain of the Taboo. One end of this chain was held by the gods, while the other was fastened round the affections, memories, hopes, fears, and habits of men. The taboo was not their religion, but the foundation of their religion; it was not their human law, but the principle which made human law divine. The taboo was the quality of *sacredness* to which the deities owed their place in heaven; the departed great their canonization; the kings and priests their infallibility; the princes and nobles their privileges; the male sex its superiority over the female. The taboo, though divine, was pliable and elastic: it had its particular and temporary, as well as its general and unchanging application. It protected Vancouver's cattle for ten years till the country was stocked. It was confined to an individual, or extended to a tribe, according to circumstances; sometimes it encircled a house, sometimes a province; sometimes it suspended the occupations of men; sometimes the very sound of their voices, the crowing of their cocks, the barking of their dogs, till a strange and terrible silence seemed to brood over the tabooed district. The penalty of any breach of the taboo was death.

It was a great thought to cast down this taboo, to which the temples, altars, and idols were only physical accessaries; but the thought grew in the brain of the great Kamehameha, and the deed was accomplished by his son. The thraldom of the taboo had weighed more

especially upon the women, who were not allowed even to eat of the same meat as their masters; and, in all probability, the fair sex rose in value as the intercourse with Europeans went on, and the injustice of their treatment came to be more obvious. However this may be, it was through them that the decisive blow at the taboo was struck. One day at a great feast, when the banquet was spread, and all things had been arranged by the king, he rose from his throne, crossed over to the women's table, and to the wonder of some, and the horror of others, sat down beside them! He helped them to the forbidden meats—he ate with them! A cry arose from the guests, who got up tumultuously from the table—"The taboo is no more!" and the high priest, an accomplice no doubt of his daring master, rushing forth from the throng, set fire to a neighbouring temple. And the flames spread till not a shrine nor an idol was left in the Sandwich Islands. Why should the people interfere? It was not the things that were sacred in their eyes, but the divine principle that had rendered them sacred—the taboo. The taboo was no more.

Some malcontents indeed took up arms; but a battle in 1819 settled the affair for ever; and the American missionaries entering the breach thus prepared for their reception, the Sandwich Islands became, in ten years, at least professedly a Christian country. To say that the whole people are really Christians even now, would be to assert a fact that could not be stated with truth of any country in Europe; and we fear it would be equally inconsistent to say, that in losing the vices of savages they have failed to acquire those of civilization. The following picture, however, will give an idea of the external change that has taken place. It occurs in the description of a visit paid by Mr. Stewart to a native lady,

whose grandmother, if not her mother, was one of the more than half naked and wholly complaisant Venuses of the South Sea:—

"The sitting room is delightful; the floor was beautifully carpeted with mats, while in the centre stood a rich couch of yellow damask, with armed chairs on either side. A native lounge, or divan, occupied the whole length of the apartment. A pier-table, covered with a rich cloth, a large mirror, and a portrait, completed the furniture on the one hand. On the other, a curtain of handsome chintz, looped up a foot or two at the bottom, partially disclosed a boudoir of Madam Kekuanoa; a principal article of its furniture being an elegant writing-table, with papers and books in the language of the country. From this she appeared to have risen as we entered the farther door. Her dress, manner, and whole deportment in receiving us, were those of a lady. A neatly bound copy of the Gospel of Luke in Hawaiian version, the first I had seen, was found lying on the sofa, with a blank book in which she had been writing."

That the progress of the Government has not been less rapid than that of the people, is proved by the change in its form which took place last year. The Legislative Council, we are coolly told (of some little islands that were *discovered* in a state of savageism sixty-eight years ago!), consisting of a House of Nobles and a House of Representatives, convened for the first time on the 20th of May. The king was dressed in a new military suit, and the queen in a figured straw-coloured silk dress; bonnet of the same colour, with white ostrich feathers. The fort announced His Majesty's entrance into the Legislative Hall by a national salute—twenty-one guns. The foreign vessels of war responded with the same number of guns. When their Majesties had

ascended the throne, the Rev. Mr. Richards, American missionary, addressed the throne of grace, after which the king ordered his assembly to be seated, and then read his speech:—"We have called you together to deliberate on matters connected with the good of our kingdom. In the exercise of our prerogative, we have appointed Gerrit P. Judd, Esq., to be our Minister for the Interior Affairs of our kingdom; Robert C. Wyllie, Esq., to be our Minister for Foreign Relations; and John Ricord, Esq., to be our Law Adviser in all matters relating to the Administration of Justice. We have ordered our Ministers to lay before you reports of their several departments. The independence of our kingdom has been most explicitly recognised by the United States, Great Britain, France, and Belgium. From each of these powers we have received the most friendly assurances."

The main income of the Government, it is added, is derived from the whalers of different nations which put into Honolulu and Lahaina for refreshment. In the year 1844, no less than three hundred and fifty-three ships and barks put into these ports, registering one hundred and twenty-four thousand, three hundred and forty tons, and navigated by seven thousand one hundred and sixty-three American, and two thousand four hundred and forty-eight other seamen; and the value of whose cargoes was seventeen million, seven hundred and thirty-three thousand, four hundred and eleven dollars. The imports for the year amount in value to three hundred and fifty thousand, three hundred and forty-seven dollars: of which one hundred and twenty-one thousand and sixty-one dollars were from the United States; from Sydney, thirty-eight thousand, two hundred and thirty-two dollars; from England, thirty-four thousand and five

dollars; and the remainder from other foreign ports. Of this amount sixty thousand and fifty-four dollars were re-exported; the remainder, amounting to two hundred and eighty-nine thousand, nine hundred and sixty-nine dollars, being consumed in the country. The estimated value of domestic produce exported is given as forty-nine thousand, one hundred and eighty-seven dollars; and of produce supplied to shipping, sixty thousand and four hundred dollars. The total net amount from all sources received at the Honolulu custom-house is stated at twelve thousand, six hundred and sixty dollars, thirty cents. There are two packets now running between Oregon and Honolulu, an American brig, and a bark of the Hudson's Bay Company; the voyage averaging from twenty-five to thirty days.

The Society Islands, and their dependencies, the Georgian Islands, the next best known in England, are two thousand seven hundred miles south of the Sandwich Islands. They were first seen by the Spaniards in 1605; but it was not for a century and a half afterwards that they began to be visited by the French and English navigators, including Cook and Bougainville. In 1788, the ship Bounty, fatally for its crew, and perhaps for the natives, reached the lovely shores of Tahiti; and from that epoch may be dated the unfortunate celebrity of the Society Islands. The country, with its fruits and flowers, its gorgeous woods and trickling waters, looked like a heaven upon earth to the sea-worn mariners. The very air around seemed laden with Sabæan odours; and as they drew nigh,

> Upon their startled ear,
> What unaccustomed sounds came from those shores,
> Charming the lone Pacific!

But Tahiti possessed another kind of enchantment, to

which the roving monks of the sea are necessarily still more sensitive than other men. The houris of this southern paradise have been often described; but we prefer the portrait of the sterner and truer missionaries to that of observers who were more likely to allow their imaginations to be governed by the conventionalisms of Europe.

"Those who carefully clothe themselves and avoid the sunbeams, are but a shade or two darker than a European brunette; their eyes are black and sparkling; their teeth white and even; their skin soft and delicate; their limbs finely turned; their hair jetty, perfumed, and ornamented with flowers; they are in general large and wide over the shoulders; we are, therefore, disappointed in the judgment we had formed from the report of preceding travellers; and though here and there was to be seen a young person who might be esteemed comely, we saw few who, in fact, could be called beauties, yet they possess eminent feminine graces; their faces are never darkened by a scowl, or covered with a cloud of sullenness or suspicion. Their manners are affable and engaging; their step easy, firm, and graceful; their behaviour free and unguarded; always boundless in generosity to each other and to strangers; their tempers mild, gentle, and unaffected; slow to take offence, easily pacified, and seldom retaining resentment or revenge, whatever provocation they may have received. Their hands and arms are very delicately formed; and though they go bare-foot, their feet are not coarse and spreading."

In fact (for beauty here becomes an historical question), these savages of the Pacific were "fearful fair," not because of their chiselled features and harmonious forms, but of their exquisite womanliness of nature,—a quality which makes

ugliness itself divine, and without which beauty has no witchery but for boys and fools. The result is well known. The crew of the *Bounty* mutinied, seized the ship, and returned to Tahiti. Some were re-taken, some executed, some drowned, some murdered; and two, the sole survivors, founded a colony on Pitcairn's Island, which, in 1830, numbered about eighty persons, speaking the English language, worshipping God in Christ, combining the energy of Europe with the simplicity of the Pacific, and exhibiting in their graceful persons the mingled blood of the two races.

Ever since the visit of Captain Cook, the savages of the South Sea had found favour in the eyes of the English; and the religious public, more especially, yearned after the eternal welfare of human beings so engaging yet so ignorant, so beautiful yet so unholy. In 1795, the Missionary Society was formed; and in the following year it despatched thirty preachers to carry the sublime Message to Tahiti. Some of these persons had secular callings like the first apostles; and the simple islanders gazed at the wonders they performed, and more especially by means of the forge, as if they had been true miracles. But this favourable impression was destroyed by the conscientiousness of the ministers, who, in order to prevent a traffic in arms and ammunition, supplied themselves a ship, which had nothing else to offer, with provisions. Then came civil war; and after twelve years spent in unremitting toil, and in the midst of anarchy and bloodshed, the last of these missionaries withdrew in despair to Australia.

But they were speedily recalled by the king, who had found the gods of his country of no use in his troubles; in 1812, he publicly broke the taboo, and professed his belief in Jehovah; and in 1817 he threw off with his own

hands the first page printed in the native press. The work of conversion now went on rapidly under the auspices of the chiefs themselves, who formed societies for assisting in it by contributions; and in 1819 the Royal Mission Chapel was opened,—a wooden building of so extravagant a size, that three preachers, holding forth simultaneously from three several pulpits, were not within hearing of each other's voices! A code of written laws was now published, seminaries of education established, and even trial by jury introduced: but the seeds of evil germinated at the same moment with those of good. Tahiti became a great rendezvous for ships, particularly for whaling vessels; and drunkenness, licentiousness, and disease, followed in the track of Europeans, and neutralized the benefits of that gospel which they professed and yet profaned. Nay, a wild and yet natural heresy sprang from the new faith itself. The blessed climate—the food and fruits offered spontaneously by nature to man—the evergreen hills and groves—the music of woods and waters—the softness and loveliness of the women—all wrought upon imaginations already heated by religious zeal; till visionaries arose, who announced that the millenium was come, that the obligation of the ten commandments had ceased, and that the requirings of the heart were the only law. Then came the usual struggle between the two great sections of Christianity; then a minority, followed by the accession of a girl to the throne; and finally, the fierce jealousies of France and England, both of which nations maintain a regular naval force in the Pacific.

The Protestant missionary rule was perhaps not well adapted to the gentle, light-hearted savages of Tahiti; and its stringency increasing with its power gave rise, it may be suspected, to much open profligacy on the one

hand, and more hypocrisy on the other. The ministers are said to have interfered even with the innocent usages of society, to have usurped many of the functions of government, and to have taken advantage of their position to obtain an undue share of trade. They no longer supplied ships with provisions gratuitously, or for so good a purpose as we have mentioned, but made eager use of their means and knowledge to rival their flock in the market. These allegations may be overcharged; but upon the whole the system did not work so well as might have been anticipated from the mild and cheerful spirit of Christianity.

The elements of disorder, however, were set in motion by political occurrences. The French, or rather their officers in the Pacific, were jealous of the power of Protestantism, and at length contrived to force the helpless Queen to accept of the *protection* of their flag. Their next step was to take possession of Tahiti for the crown of France; upon which the British consul hauled down his flag, and the whole affair was in due time disavowed by the cabinet of the Tuilleries, and the overhasty admiral recalled. But the indiscretion of the French officials did not end here. In 1844, they visited upon a British subject, formerly a missionary, but then performing the functions of consul, the offences of the people in resisting the absurd and odious tyranny of the protectorate; and had it not been for the good sense and moderation of the two European cabinets, the whole world would have been in one blaze of war. The result of French protection and English conversion still remains to be unfolded by time.

The other islands, though occasionally visited by European ships, are not as yet of sufficient commercial importance—with one remarkable exception—to warrant

their introduction into these pages. The Marquesas, we believe, still continue to resist the efforts of the missionaries, whether Protestant or Catholic, their wild inhabitants continuing idolators and cannibals to this day; while in the Friendly, Navigation, Hervey's, and various other groups a fair proportion of the inhabitants are already Christians.

CHAPTER II.

NEW ZEALAND.

The exception alluded to at the conclusion of the last chapter is New Zealand, an island of the South Pacific, which although about twelve hundred miles distant from the new continent is, politically, one of the Australian colonies of Great Britain. We here arrive at a point where it is expedient that some change should take place in the plan of the present work. We have traversed the old regions whose manners and institutions belong to history; we have touched lightly upon the little fungi of the southern ocean, which have ripened in a hot-bed of European civilization, and grown up into a spongy and unwholesome maturity before our eyes; and we now arrive at a series of great countries without recollections, without stability, whose past is a blank, and whose present is a whirling chaos. The proper contributors to Australian history are as yet the journalists, who float on with the current of events, and whose aggregate labours will one

day supply what is wanting; but a Book, which would not at once grow out of date like a newspaper or a magazine, must confine itself, in a great measure, to general views, without aspiring to paint the protean forms of the time.

New Zealand was discovered in 1642 by the Dutch navigator Tasman, and visited by Cook in 1769; the latter giving his name to the strait which divides the two principal islands. Both these great captains found the natives fierce and inhospitable; and Cook killed four of them in an encounter sustained by the savages with heroic bravery. A French ship, however, about the same time, was received with much kindness, which the captain repaid by treacherously seizing and carrying off one of the chiefs; and in three years after, twenty-seven officers and men of the same nation, after being lulled into security by a show of confidence and friendship, were murdered and their bodies devoured. In 1773 ten more Frenchmen met the same fate, and their bodies the same unnatural tomb; and it was not till towards the close of the century that the formidable savages were prevailed upon to accept the advances of foreigners. By degrees, however, they submitted to their fate; and an amicable intercourse appeared to be completely established, when, in 1809, another terrific massacre—the slaughter of a whole ship's crew, consisting of nearly seventy persons, perpetrated on very slight provocation—appeared to interpose an impassable barrier between the two races. This barrier, notwithstanding, was overleaped by the heroism of the Church Missionaries, who commenced their labours in 1809; and in a wonderfully short time the beautiful deserts of New Zealand echoed not only to the songs of Zion, but to the cheerful voices of the ploughman and artisan.

While the gospel was thus spreading over the land, and the wild natives were acquiring at least the external habits of civilization, the government of Great Britain continued to look on passively at a spectacle so interesting even in a political aspect. New Zealand was a country as large as Great Britain and Ireland, with a population of only one hundred thousand souls, or one inhabitant to about seven hundred acres. It was, in fact, almost wholly unoccupied ground, and its fine climate, natural resources, and relative position to the Australian settlements, and the smaller islands of the Pacific, held out irresistible invitations to colonists. The misfortune was, that the invitations were accepted, in the first instance, by a class of persons who could bring with them only the vices and miseries of civilization,—deserters from ships, escaped convicts, and needy and worthless adventurers of all kinds, who were glad to leave behind the trammels of decent society, and the restrictions of regular government. In New Zealand the poorest found land, and the most vicious friends ; and there being no law to restrain, they followed in the track of the missionaries, to devour like locusts the fruits of their pious toil.

In the mean time the attention of various influential persons in England was attracted towards these islands, and the irregular and vicious system of colonization under which they were suffering; and in 1825 a company was formed,—which at the time, however, had no results,—for the purpose of founding a settlement of a better kind. Another society, still more respectable in means and number, was instituted in 1837, but they declined to proceed upon a royal charter without an act of parliament, and their bill was thrown out in the House of Commons. In 1839, as they had gone too far in their preparations to recede without loss, they would have been

satisfied with the royal charter of incorporation at first tendered to them; but this being in turn refused by the government, they determined to act as an independent body. The government and parliament, it must be observed, had expressly recognised New Zealand as an independent state under the rule of its chiefs; with whom it was, of course, the business of the Company to treat—and a very easy business it was found to be. The notion that twenty thousand savages (the highest number it is possible to assume of adult males) were the real owners of a country as large as Great Britain and Ireland, was one of the wildest hallucinations mentioned in history; but the New Zealanders made no scruple about the matter, accepting with much complacency whatever was offered to them, although doubtless much puzzled to know what it was they gave in return. Thus the Company became all on a sudden great proprietors, and before the end of the year the first body of their emigrants had sailed from England to take possession of the promised land.

The government, in the mean time, while discouraging the Company, were not blind to the signs of the times. They knew that so large a body as the English settlers constituted (even before the new emigration) could not be left to their fate, and that the movement, in and out of parliament, in favour of the islands, could not be treated with contempt. The result of their deliberations was that the settlers of the New Zealand Company were very speedily followed by a consul who, agreeably to his instructions, entered into a treaty with the chiefs for the transference of the sovereignty of their country to the British crown; and this was accordingly proclaimed, just in time to prevent the French from taking possession of the territory.

The following were the principles on which the treaty of Waitangi ought to have been framed, according to the opinion of Sir George Gipps, as delivered by him in laying a bill before the legislative council for the regulation of the new colony, at first a dependency of his own government of New South Wales:—"The bill is founded," he said, "upon two or three general principles which, until I heard them here controverted, I thought were fully admitted, and indeed received as political axioms. The first is, that the uncivilized inhabitants of any country have but a qualified dominion over it, or a right of occupancy only; and that, until they establish amongst themselves a settled form of government, and subjugate the ground to their own uses, by the cultivation of it, they cannot grant to individuals not of their own tribe any portion of it, for the simple reason that they have not themselves any individual property in it. Secondly, that if a settlement be made in any such country by a civilized power, the right of pre-emption of the soil, or, in other words, the right of extinguishing the native title, is exclusively in the government of that power, and cannot be enjoyed by individuals without the consent of their government. The third principle is, that neithe individuals nor bodies of men belonging to any nation can form colonies, except with the consent, and under the direction and control, of their own government; and that from any settlement which they may form without the consent of their government they may be ousted. This is simply to say, as far as Englishmen are concerned, that colonies cannot be formed without the consent of the crown."

The restricted property right of the natives, here laid down, was not mentioned in the treaty at all; and, unluckily, the lieutenant-governor, who appears to have

had no private instructions on the subject, understood the document to constitute every native man, woman, and child in New Zealand, the proprietor of seven hundred acres of land, which all might sell as they thought fit, only giving the British Crown the right of preemption as some return for the trouble of governing them! More unluckily still, the government at home did not at once repudiate the interpretation of their officers, but suffered so much time to be consumed in deliberations and debates that the infant colony was on the brink of ruin. Even when at length it appeared to be settled that such lands as were not actually possessed and occupied by the natives were to be at the disposal of the crown, the question remained—what was to be done with those colonists who held by purchase from the chiefs before the transfer of the sovereignty? These purchases, it was determined, were illegal, because no British subject had a right to colonize without the sanction of his government; but, at the same time, when the lands were resumed by the crown, it was conceded that the actual occupiers should have a right of pre-emption at a very low rate.

But the New Zealand Company was in a different category from the other holders of land. It was a great and important body, to whom the nation was not merely indebted for the sovereignty of the islands, but for their preservation from the rival nation, France; and, at any rate, their rising settlements comprised the chief wealth and respectability of the country. A charter, therefore, was issued to them in 1841, together with a free grant of land, to the extent of four times as many acres as they could prove they had expended pounds sterling in colonization. This expenditure had to be investigated by an accountant, and his award examined

at the colonial office; a commission had to be appointed for settling the land claims; the home government had to be worried by the New Zealand Company, the friends of the missionary settlers, and the patrons of the aborigines; and ministers had not only to defend themselves, but palliate and excuse the conduct of the colonial functionaries, who were unable to escape from their first hallucination, but continued stumbling from error into error. It was, in short, only last year that a parliamentary inquiry had the effect of reducing the chaos to something like order, and giving these fine islands a chance of at length entering upon that course of prosperity for which they seem intended by nature.

But, in the mean time, the natives, it may be supposed, were greatly puzzled by the conflict around them; of which they probably comprehended not one tittle more than that they had been, by some extraordinary interposition of the European providence, constituted the possessors of a vast quantity of land besides their own which they cultivated and occupied, and that the sales they had made and been paid for were illegal on the part of the buyers. The effect of such notions upon men just emerging from the darkest barbarism may be conceived. On one occasion, in 1843, it gave rise to an armed conflict, called the Wairau massacre, in which twenty-two lives were lost on the side of the English, including those of some of the most eminent and valuable individuals in the colony. The settlers, in this unhappy affair, were in some degree to blame, inasmuch as they insisted upon surveying certain lands, their claim to which was still under the consideration of the commission; and as for the previous purchase from the natives, asserted by one party and denied by the other, it had by this time nothing to do with the question of legal right at all. A

still more important effect, however, of the weakness and vacillation of the government exhibited itself in 1845, when the discontent of the natives assumed, for the first time, the form of patriotism. At the Bay of Islands, a chief called Heki declared that so far from being the enemy he was the friend of the colonists—that he warred solely against the Flag of England; and accordingly this outward and visible symbol of sovereignty became the object of a bloody contention. The flag-staff was repeatedly overthrown, and repeatedly replaced, till at length the natives, gathering in great numbers, attacked the town of Kororarika, although it was defended by a four-gun and a one-gun battery and the crew of a man-of-war, and captured it by assault after a whole day's fighting, and burnt it to the ground, killing twelve Europeans, and destroying property to the amount of sixty thousand pounds. Two more fights followed, in which the "savage" was likewise the victor, slaying on one occasion thirty-nine of the English—one-third of the entire force actually engaged. Heki is a baptized chief, and like other heroes of romance, is not only brave in battle, but polite and humane. Before attacking Kororarika, he gave notice to the American whalers in the vicinity to keep their men out of harm's way; and immediately on capturing the flag-staff on the final occasion, he took out the signal-man's wife and daughter from the house with his own hands, and sent them, protected by a flag of truce, to the beach.

The country, in so interesting a state of transition, is physically one of the most favoured in the world. The climate resembles that of the south of France in temperature, but is more bracing to the human frame. "It may be asserted," says Dr. Martin, "that land in New Zealand similar to that which in England, on account

of cold and wet, and in New South Wales, on account of too much heat and drought, would be quite unproductive, will, in this country, owing to the genial warmth of the climate, and the moderate and steady supply of moisture, produce the richest crops. Wheat will grow abundantly and luxuriantly in our lightest ferny and even sandy soils; in fact, in soils which in either of the other two countries would be absolutely useless." There is also abundance, however, of alluvial soil fit for the production of the finest wheat; barley, maize, oats, hops, and all the European grasses thrive luxuriantly; while the common potato grows side by side with the komara and the tomo. "Let any man with two hands and ordinary strength," says a practical observer, "procure but the land to work upon, with half food (the other half he can procure for himself from the bush and the sea) for the first six months, and if he be not the laziest creature that God ever made in the shape of a human being, he is an independent man as far as mere living is concerned." From the bush he obtains, by means of his gun, a wild pig of exquisite flavour if a female; and from the river and the sea, a great variety of excellent fish. Cattle, horses, and sheep, we are told, thrive and fatten "even on the poorest pasture;" the beef is better than that of any of the neighbouring colonies; and the wool is superior to the fleeces of Australia.

The climate is said, by a medical writer,—and a good grumbler too,—to be the very best in the whole world; and not only the very best and most pleasant to live in, but also the very healthiest; for if ever there was a country where disease (mere ordinary natural disease) is unknown, it is certainly this. In fine, "New Zealand has, properly speaking, neither summer nor winter—it is one never-ending spring: there is no decay, no sear

or yellow leaf; nature is for ever smiling and in bloom. In the dead of winter, the manuka and many other plants have their modest and beautiful flowers. Flora is never without the crown; the wreath of flowers is always gratefully presented by some member or other of our lovely woods. Winter and summer insensibly but kindly embrace one another; they are, in fact, twin sisters that have blessed the country with all that man can desire."

Among the articles adapted for export, either now produced, or capable of being produced by New Zealand, may be mentioned provisions of all kinds, wine, beer, spirits, bees' wax, wool, and hides. Copper is abundant and of fine quality in various parts of the country; manganese may be obtained at Auckland for ballast more readily than the ordinary material; iron, tin, lead, nickel, and even silver have been discovered; coals, sulphur, rock-salt, alum, and nitre, are more or less plentiful; and flax and oil are already staple exports. There are, likewise, various woods adapted for spars, deck-planks, blocks, and shieves, as well as those fit for fine furniture, inlaying, and other ornamental purposes. Dyes, tannin, sarsaparilla, gum, and a host of miscellaneous articles are among the treasures of New Zealand. Whaling, however, appears destined to become a very great business in these islands, the ordinary duration of a voyage from England being at present about three years. Indeed, the southern whale fishery of the mother country, already in a declining state, will, in all probability, pass entirely into the hands of the Australian colonists.

The natives of New Zealand ought not much longer to play any very important part in the history of the settlement. The attention of the home government has

been fairly awakened to the magnitude of their acquisition, and by yielding to the aborigines and colonists alike, they have made land of such easy acquirement, that there is now little doubt of its being rapidly occupied by Europeans. It were to be wished, however, that the natives might only disappear by being absorbed into the new population; and indeed, in the midst of some of the vices of savages they possess many characteristics which the world would not "willingly let die."

The New Zealanders, although of the same race as the Tahitians, present many points of difference even in personal appearance; of which perhaps the most remarkable is, that the women are inferior to the men physically as well as mentally. The former are rather above than under the middle size of Europe, and some very tall, and have mild, intelligent, and expressive countenances. Tattooing is fast going out of fashion with cannibalism; but it appears to have been but little practised at any time by the females, who have merely three short lines drawn from the under lip. This is precisely the case with the Coptic women; and it has been noticed that the wood-carving of the New Zealanders resembles closely the ancient sculptures both of the Egyptians and South Americans, while their language and some of their customs bear an equally remarkable analogy with those of continental India. The dress of the islanders of both sexes was formerly a mat hung round their shoulders. This, however, has now pretty generally given place to a blanket; and in the neighbourhood of English settlements to the European dress. Their ornaments are one ear-ring of shark's tooth, beads, &c.; the other ear, which is likewise pierced, being devoted to an object of utility—the holding their tobacco pipe during the few and brief intervals when it is not in use.

The women, like their sisters of Tahiti, have good looks without actual beauty, and kind and affectionate dispositions; and they are capable of devoted attachment, more especially in their European connections. The men, we are told by a colonist—and colonists do not often speak in praise of the aborigines—present many fine specimens of humanity, physically, mentally, and morally, whom some of our fair countrywomen might easily find reasons for preferring to their own race. "If report speak truly," he adds, "such instances have already occurred, and a little countenance only is required to establish and confirm these matrimonial connections."

It has been remarked, that there being no accounts of the New Zealanders antecedent to the appropriation of the land, they must have passed, before the visits of Europeans, the wandering and unsettled stage of society, and arrived at that more improved condition in which the ground is cultivated and its produce becomes an article of barter. But in such speculations it is forgotten that the islands of the Pacific have no animals indigenously which could support a race either of shepherds or hunters; and that even in their cultivation of the land, the present inhabitants exhibit those erratic habits which precede the fixed forms of civilization. Perhaps in the paucity of their number, however, there may be found the surest indications of a state of barbarism; a paucity which, in so fine a climate and with so productive a soil, can hardly be accounted for even by their savage wars, their precocious marriages, their practice of infanticide, and the low value of human life in a community where human beings were used as food, and slaves fattened like domestic animals for the table. But no wild animals, even of the human species, increase with the same rapidity as those that are reclaimed. The wild and

tame cat are cited by Blumenbach, and also the domestic and forest sow; the former of which brings forth commonly two litters in the year, each consisting perhaps of twenty young ones, while the latter becomes pregnant only once in the same time, and the number of its young never exceeds ten. The New Zealanders, besides the proof of savagism drawn from the state of the population, were divided into tribes or families under independent chiefs, not one of whom had ever attained the sovereign rule, but all exercised alike the irresponsible power of the taboo.

But in the midst of all this, there are various traits of manners that would seem to hint at some traditionary refinement inconsistent with their later condition. Among these are the ceremonial observances on occasions whether of joy and grief, both of which sentiments are indicated by the same external token—tears. They cannot comprehend the coolness with which European friends shake hands. They themselves not only embrace and rub noses, but then sit down opposite each other, and drawing their mats over their heads cry for joy as if their hearts were breaking. The western strangers, they say, meet like so many dogs. Tears are in great demand in New Zealand, and the supply is unlimited. To be able to cry well is a more necessary accomplishment for a chief than to be able to fight well. Although there being no state there can be no recognised code of justice, still the want of this is remedied for general purposes by public opinion manifested in a kind of Lynch law. Offences are punished not by courts of justice, but by the People, and rarely by any other penalty than a forcible confiscation of property, which appears to be very incorrectly designated by the word "robbery." The offender, so far from resisting does not even secrete his goods when he has received

intimation of what is impending. He submits much more calmly than the victim of a legal distraint in England, and sometimes entertains hospitably the ministers of this wild justice. Frequently the punishment extends to the family or tribe, and almost always includes the individual who has been sinned against as well as the sinner: a man, for instance, being mulcted in this way for the frailty of his wife. The English, who rarely get beyond the conventionalisms of their own country, did not understand being punished, even for the most obvious offences, without being first tried and condemned,—tried where no law in their meaning of the term existed, and condemned where there were no ministers of justice. They called the transaction robbery, and defended their property with the strong arm, and thus mutual bad feeling was engendered and kept up.

The English, besides, were not merely a different tribe, but a different race; and although each New Zealand tribe may have been accustomed to be at feud with its neighbours, all collectively were at feud with the strangers. These strangers were, at one time, considered as gods, being invested with divinity by the artificial thunder they wielded; and the poor natives, when they found it impossible to prevent the white men from settling upon their shores, looked up to them with reverence and awe. But drunkenness, which they hated; unguardedness of temper, which they despised; and inordinate covetousness, of which they were the victims, were no attributes of the celestial nature: and the charm began to unwind even before the Europeans shared with them the secret of firearms for gain—selling their birthright for a mess of pottage. Then came the disputes among the intruders themselves, and the weakness and vacillation of their government in the land question; the authorities some-

times siding with one party sometimes with another, but always yielding to any appearance of force when the natives thought fit to exhibit it. Under such circumstances, it is no wonder if, in the intercourse of the two races, only the unfavourable side of the aboriginal character should have presented itself. To Europeans, the natives are grasping, covetous, false, and either cringing or insolent as the occasion demands. Among themselves they are generous to a fault, polite, kind hearted, and sincere. Their generosity, more especially, is unbounded; for although, in practice, it may be said to be merely an interchange of gifts, it frequently reduces the giver to poverty for the time, and leaves him to the chances of the world for a return. In giving, they do not sound a trumpet like the eastern nations, but carelessly fling the article on the ground before their friend; and the latter picks it up without a word of thanks. This is called ingratitude by Europeans, who do not understand refinement when they meet with it in a different form from that of their own.

On the other hand, the New Zealanders are supposed to have less natural affection than most other tribes of mankind. The mothers, though sufficiently kind and forbearing, neither fondle their children nor chastise them; although occasionally they put them to death (if females), and without the excuse of poverty as in China, or (at least in late times) of superstition as in India. The affections of individuals are bestowed upon the tribe; and there is no private or family friendship. The husband and wife are as indifferent, yet as polite, to each other as in the best circles of Europe; and parents expect and receive no more assistance from their children than from strangers.

A portion of this is explained by the system of tribes, which answer to the castes of India. A mother is of a

different tribe from her husband, and consequently from his children, and she no more dares to beat the one than the other, as the insult would be immediately avenged. The husband, on his part, is under the same restriction with regard to his wife ; and hence a conventional politeness takes the place of natural affection. The children thus brought up become independent when as yet tiny boys and girls, cultivating their patches of land for their own support, and paddling about alone in their canoes—the latter, it is said, at four years of age. They are grave and quiet as befits little men and women, and the females often marry at eleven, and become old and withered at an age when their sisters of other countries in the same parallel are as yet in the prime of youth. A New Zealand fair is not courted, and the mere fact of a man leading her to his hut constitutes her his wife. The chiefs are allowed a plurality of spouses, and stand upon no ceremony in planting in their harem such unmarried women as they fancy. Chastity is not reckoned a feminine virtue before marriage ; but a wife is under taboo to her husband, and infidelity becomes a crime.

The New Zealanders, notwithstanding all that has occurred, appear to be an exceedingly gentle, tractable, and easily governed people. The work of conversion goes on rapidly among them, and the odious habits of savages disappear with their gods and idols. Their hitherto uncultivated intellect is of a high order ; and in their commercial dealings, they exhibit a zeal and acuteness which would be remarkable even in Europeans. What, then, is the obstacle to the pacification of this beautiful and interesting country ?

It is the fact that the New Zealanders sold their land and their fealty under a delusion. Their untutored minds were unable to conceive the idea of a great nation. They

supposed the British to consist of a few small tribes like themselves, and were willing to locate them on their lands that they might profit by their intelligence and their trade. This was clear from the circumstance of their considering the non-occupation of the estate sufficient to render the purchase void; while in other cases the chiefs made rival boasts among themselves of the ingenuity of "their white men." When they saw, however, that there was no end to the immigration, and that the Queen of this countless hive, whom they had expected to bring up the rear, was as far from making her appearance as ever, they took the alarm; and being encouraged by the indecision of the government, and the conflicting interests of the colonists, they at length appealed to the arbitrement of battle.

A war in the bush, where the hatchet must pioneer the sword at every step, may be prolonged for years, and can only end with the extermination of the natives. Would it be inconsistent with the honour of a mighty nation to yield the northern island to this handful of gallant savages?—to assist, befriend, and trade with them?—to allow its subjects to purchase such lands as they might be disposed to sell, and settle among them in friendly communities? If this is done, it may be safely predicted that their country will in time become one of the most valuable colonies of Great Britain; that they will themselves amalgamate insensibly with the new settlers; and that in a very few years this brief chapter in their history will become obsolete.

CHAPTER III.

NEW SOUTH WALES AND TASMANIA.

The continent of Australia is supposed to present an area of upwards of three million miles; but with the exception of the narrow rim along the line of coast, which is about eight thousand miles in length, all is one of those blanks which earlier geographers would have filled with the words *terra incognita*, and still earlier would have laid out in imaginary countries and impossible seas. A ridge of mountains appears on all sides to approach the shore, sometimes within a distance of only thirty miles; but what may exist within this circle it is difficult even to conjecture. In most other parts of the world there are great rivers which connect the interior with the sea, and appear designed by nature for a path by which men may fulfil their destiny in replenishing the earth; but here, among numerous anomalies almost as extraordinary, these waters either dwindle or entirely disappear before reaching the ocean. Some suppose the interior to be a vast

plain; others suspect that it may rise in steppes or terraces like Southern Africa; while the latest explorers entertain something like a conviction that an inland sea, or at the least a mighty river, will eventually reward discovery.

In 1609, a Spanish navigator visited Australia; and soon after the western, and a portion of the northern coast, were explored by the Dutch. In 1641, Tasman discovered Van Diemen's Land to be an island, and not, as had been previously supposed, a cape of the new continent; and afterwards, the Gulf of Carpentaria, at the north-eastern side, was explored by a captain named Carpenter. In 1777, Cook took possession of the eastern coast, which was called New South Wales.

Forty-eight years before this last epoch, George I. had established the practice of transporting convicts, by sending a hundred such persons to Virginia, where he presumed the advantage of their labour would more than compensate for the disadvantage of their vices. The system, however, was not long of falling into discredit, because the convicts were rivalled by a new class of labourers; and when the colonists found that they could get negro slaves in abundance, whom they might flog and mutilate without ceremony, their morality took the alarm. Their virtue—their religion was in danger, from the infusion of so pernicious an English element into the population; and when Franklin was told that convicts must be sent to America, because they could not be suffered to remain at home, he asked if the same reason would justify the Americans in sending their rattlesnakes to England? The war of independence in 1776 put a stop, for a time, to the practice of transportation till, at its close, the accumulation of prisoners in the jails had become a very serious evil, which could only be partially

remedied by the hulks, and labour at public works. It was at length determined to found a penal settlement in New South Wales; and in 1788 a colony was established at Port Jackson, near Botany Bay, consisting of six hundred male and two hundred and fifty female convicts, under a guard of two hundred marines, forty of whom were accompanied by their families. In 1790, the second fleet carried out sixteen hundred and ninety-five male and sixty-eight female convicts; and thus the system was fairly commenced which has been pursued, though with various modifications, till very recently.

Port Jackson was found to be one of the noblest harbours in the world, navigable for the heaviest vessels for fifteen miles from its entrance, indented with sheltered coves, and presenting the finest anchorage. The spot chosen for the settlement was at the head of Sydney Cove, "near a run of fresh water," says Collins, "which stole silently through a very thick wood, the stillness of which had then, for the first time since the creation, been interrupted by the rude sound of the labourer's axe, and the downfall of its ancient inhabitants,—a stillness and tranquillity which from that day were to give place to the noise of labour, the confusion of camps and towns, and the busy hum of its new possessors." The adventurers were for a time subjected to many hardships, and a sentence of transportation in England frequently included both shipwreck and famine. They struggled bravely on, however (a few convicts being occasionally hung for their misdeeds, and a larger number rewarded with freedom and grants of land), till the colony—rapidly extended in area by discoveries along the coast—began to lose, to a certain extent, its original appearance of a vast prison.

An attempt had been early made to colonize, as a relief to the parent colony, Norfolk Island, distant about

two thousand miles from Sydney; but had it not been for the myriads of birds, the pioneers must have starved outright before sufficient grain was raised for their support. This island is described in a pamphlet published at Sydney, as being of volcanic origin, about twenty-one miles in circumference, and one of the loveliest spots in the world. It consists, we are told, of a series of hills and valleys, curiously interfolded, the green ridges rising one above another, until they reach the shaggy sides and crowning summit of Mount Pitt, at the height of three thousand feet above the level of the sea. Here is presented a tree-crested mound; there a plantation of pines; and yonder a ravine descending into the very bowels of the earth, and covered with an intricacy of dark foliage, interluminated with checkers of sun-light, until beyond it opens a receding vista to the blue sea. And now the view closes, so that the sun is almost shut out; while giant creepers shoot, twist, and contort themselves upon the path, and beautiful pigeons, lories, parrots, parroquets, and other birds, rich and varied in plumage, spring up at an approaching step. Then succeeds a vista of lemon trees, forming overhead a varied arcade of green, gold, and sun-light. Around are farms, where the yellow hulm bends with the fat of corn; and gardens, where, by the side of the broad-breasted English oak, grow the cinnamon-tree, the tea, the coffee, the sugar cane, the arrow-root, the banana, with its long sweeping streamers and creamy fruit, the fig, all tropical fruits in perfection, and the English vegetables in gigantic growth. "The air is most pure, the sky most brilliant," continues our author, somewhat in Ercles's vein; "in the morning the whole is drenched with dew, and as the sun comes out of his bed of amber, and shoots over a bar of crimson rays, it is one embroidery of the pearl, the ruby, and the emerald: as

the same sun, at mellow eventide, aslants his yellow rays between the pines and the mountain, they show like the bronzed spires of some vast cathedral, flooded in golden light."

Notwithstanding all the advantages of the place, Norfolk Island was abandoned for a time, for some inexplicable reason, just when the settlement of a number of freed men in profitable farms gave earnest of its prosperity. Eventually, however, the step was repented of; it was again taken possession of, and this beautiful island converted into a prison for the most desperate of the desperate, for those felons reconvicted of felony in New South Wales, and for the convicts sent out from England under sentence for life.

"For the benefit of mankind at large," says Bentham, "it is desirable that the offsets which are to be employed as new plants should be taken from the most healthy stocks, and the most flourishing roots; that the people who go forth to colonize unoccupied lands, should go forth from the nation whose political constitution is most favourable to the security of individuals; that the new colonies should be swarms from the most industrious hive, and that their education should have formed them to those habits of frugality and labour which are necessary to make transplanted families succeed." These principles were not acted upon in the colonization of New South Wales, nor was the obvious expedient resorted to of overpowering vice by a large admixture of free settlers with the population. The question of the propriety of employing convict labour at all in a colony, it is not our province to discuss; but we confess we cannot see clearly why, with due attention to proportion in numbers, the compulsory industry of the prisoners of the law should not be turned to account in clearing the wilderness

abroad, as well as in public works at home. A convict who finds himself ten or twelve thousand miles from the scene of his crimes, and in the bosom of a new and healthy society, where his fortune depends entirely upon his own conduct, has, at least, a chance of amendment. In Tasmania, where the proportion of free settlers was considerable, their compulsory servants were rarely heard to boast of their crimes. Every man there, by his own account, was the victim of some mistake of the law, and this deceit was a homage paid to virtue, which of itself held out good promise. But however the question may stand when considered as to its abstract merits, there would appear to be but little doubt of the sound policy of transportation in so densely peopled a country as England, which would otherwise be at once a great workshop, a great poorhouse, and a great prison.

But in New South Wales the population was almost all composed of "rattlesnakes," and the result may be imagined. To send a few free settlers into a dense mass of criminals would have been a worse crime, if it had not been a mere folly, than any of the latter ever committed. In a very short time they caught the infection they were intended to check, and the whole colony became a den of vice and infamy which it is difficult to describe. The military and the government officers were the leaders in depravity; and the government itself, by a strange infatuation, as if to take care that no element of disorder should be wanting, encouraged the use of ardent spirits by every means in its power. "Until so late a period," says Dr. Lang, "as the 18th of August 1816, when the demoralizing practice was discontinued by order of Earl Bathurst, ardent spirits were held by the colonial government as the circulating medium or current coin of the colony; they were given in payment for work of every

description performed for government, and issued out in certain fixed quantities to civil and military officers, overseers, clerks, and constables, by way of remuneration, as it was termed, for imaginary services." Under this fostering influence the colony, he tells us, became one grand scene of brutal dissipation and licentiousness—of lawless violence and rapine.

In 1804 an expedition was sent from England to Port Phillip, on the south-east coast of Australia, for the purpose of planting there a penal settlement; but the officer in command, meeting with some difficulty, proceeded to Tasmania, where eventually Hobart Town at one end of the island, and Launceston at the other, were thus accidentally founded as dependencies of New South Wales. In 1807, when the government was in the hands of Captain Bligh, the commander of the memorable Bounty, a dispute arose in consequence of his determination to control the abuses in the sale of spirits, the result of which was that the governor was put under arrest by the military! The next governor, General Macquarie, ruled the colony from 1809 to 1821, and his reign is remarkable for the importance the new country began to assume in its commercial intercourse with England. The number of sheep increased during this period from twenty-five thousand to one hundred thousand, and sheep-farming became the general pursuit of the colony. The progress of discovery was now systematically conducted by the government; new settlements were pushed out in every direction; and the free colonists were not merely supplied with abundance of compulsory labour, but the convicts were set to work on public buildings of all kinds in Sydney, and on the construction of roads from settlement to settlement. The line of communication was in this way carried through the towns of Paramatta, Windsor, and

Richmond to the Hawkesbury; to Liverpool, Campbell Town, Airds and Appin; and to the pastoral settlement of Bathurst, a hundred and thirty miles westward of Sydney.

While pursuing these objects of utility, however, General Macquarie applied himself to another of still more importance without due caution. The progress of the colony was retarded by the paucity of free settlers; and to remedy this evil, and create an agricultural population, he distributed grants of land indiscriminately to emancipated convicts — taking the whole class under his special patronage, and giving them the entrée at the government house. The emancipists, as they were called, were now the colonists par excellence, and piqued themselves on the distinction to which they owed their advancement in society. In 1823, the editor of a newspaper at Sydney, himself a "respectable man," and a free emigrant, expressed his regret at the anniversary dinner of the colony, that he was not an emancipist himself—that he had not arrived among them as a convict!

The rule of General Sir Thomas Brisbane, which commenced in 1821, is chiefly remarkable for the efforts at length made by the home government to encourage free immigration into the colony, and those of the colonial government to ruin the emigrants when they did come by tampering with the currency.

The convicts, hitherto, had been chiefly employed by the government direct, and were thus a continual and heavy burthen upon the nation; but the assignment system now come fully into practice, which transferred their services to such free emigrants as could maintain them. Enormous abuses were the result. Harsh masters governed their bondmen by means of the lash, which could be inflicted summarily on the slightest pretext by any justice of the peace; while others bribed the

sulky slaves to their duty with allowances of spirits. In the country they lived in huts separate from their master's dwelling, and stole out at night to drunken orgies with the squatters in the neighbouring bush, or to assignations of another kind with the gins or wives of the savages. In the towns, if they were clever artisans, they rose at once into consequence, their fortunate employers not presuming to thwart the men from whose labour they derived a handsome income. Sometimes they were assigned to freed convicts, by whom they were received at once on terms of good fellowship; and sometimes they were given for helpmates to their own wives, who came out from England, occasionally with considerable sums of money, to lighten the lot of their husbands. In Sydney, the police was almost useless from the facility of escape afforded by the want of continuity in the houses, and by the neighbouring bush.

General Brisbane was recalled in 1825, and was succeeded by General Sir Ralph Darling, who imitated the imprudence of Macquarie on the opposite side, by giving undue preference to free settlers, who now began to crowd into the country, and by discouraging the convict population from any attempt to arrive at respectability. This was the epoch also of the establishment of the Australian Agricultural Company, a wealthy and powerful body, the sudden introduction of whose capital among a moneyless community had the effect of stimulating the trade in wool to an unnatural extent, and giving rise to extravagant expectations and commensurate habits of living. In 1827, 1828, and 1829, the value of imports rose from 362,324*l.* to 601,004*l.*; while in the same years the exports were only from 70,314*l.* to 163,716. While the colonists were thus living on an imaginary capital, a drought raged in the country, which compelled them to purchase grain in

Tasmania, and this added to the general misery when the reaction took place, and payment of the bills on which so flourishing a business had been carried on, could no longer be postponed.

When General Sir Richard Bourke assumed the helm in 1832, he found a thousand elements of disorder at work, but none more powerful than the antagonism of classes. Macquarie had declared New South Wales to be a convict colony, where free settlers had no business; and Brisbane had pronounced it to be a free colony, wherein convicts must never aspire to be more than hewers of wood and drawers of water to the others. In the time of the latter governor, however, the convicts were too numerous and too wealthy to be kept down; and the Brisbane settlers being limited to "respectable people," who possessed 500*l.*, and could employ compulsory labour instead of working themselves, they were completely at the mercy of the antagonistic class. The new immigrants came in so rapidly, that at length there were applications for two thousand more servants than Government had convicts to assign; and this had introduced at the commencement of General Brisbane's administration a measure which some thought should have been adopted long before. The lands were no longer given away, but sold; and a portion of the funds thus produced was laid out in facilitating the emigration from England of working people. In a vast region like New South Wales, it was impossible to prevent the colonists from feeding their sheep on the waste lands which stretched away to a boundless extent from the limits of the settlements, and where they are at this moment said to pasture on half a million square miles. Hitherto men did as they pleased with this enormous common, the sales of land being restricted to the surveyed districts, in order to concen-

trate the population within a reasonable space; but now the squatters, as they were called, were required to purchase a license, and thus even the most distant wanderers were retained in dependence upon the crown.

The government of Sir George Gipps, which commenced in 1838, has already been the epoch of great changes. The abuses of the assignment system led to a gradual diminution in the number of convicts shipped from England, till at length, in 1840, an entire stop was put to transportation to New South Wales, and the penal colonies in this part of the world were confined to Tasmania and Norfolk Island. By the Act 5 and 6 Vict. c. 76, the legislative council has been made to consist of thirty-six members, only twelve of whom are appointed by the crown, and the remainder elected by the inhabitants. The new parliament thus constituted has power "to make laws for the peace, welfare, and good government of the said colony; provided always, that no such law shall be repugnant to the law of England, or interfere in any manner with the sale or other appropriation of the lands belonging to the crown, or with the revenue thereon arising."

Such are the leading incidents in the history of New South Wales; for the commercial revolutions the country has sustained, however important in themselves, would be of little interest to the general reader, since they have left untouched the resources of the colony. The same elements of prosperity still exist as in the olden time, when bullock-drivers poured a dozen of champagne, at eight or nine shillings a bottle, into a tub, that they might luxuriate more easily in the enjoyment.* The settlement is still in its infancy, and in fact has as yet been nothing more than a series of experiments. The

* Braim's "History of New South Wales."

recent addition of tallow to wool as a staple export promises to be of immense importance. Wines, resembling those of France and Germany, are already made to a considerable extent; brandy is distilled from peaches—which sell at a farthing a dozen; and tobacco, equal to the American negro-head, is coming into general use. Specimens of cotton produced at Moreton Bay have been manufactured into yarn at Glasgow, and pronounced of superior quality; the coffee shrub likewise grows well in the same locality; and sugar has been made successfully at Port Macquarie. Mr. Hodgkinson saw the cane growing luxuriantly at the MacLeay river; and Dr. Lang was of opinion, ten years ago, that if some Chinese were induced to immigrate to one of the northern districts, the tea plant might be introduced with every prospect of success. With regard to agriculture, the resources of the colony have never as yet been examined. Instead of importing wheat, as at present, great quantities might be raised for exportation, were there a market at hand, from the southern districts; while rice and maize might be produced in any quantities in the north.

The following details will give some general idea of the actual progress of the colony during the nine years ending with 1844. The population in 1836 was seventy-seven thousand and ninety-six, consisting of forty-nine thousand two hundred and sixty-five free, and twenty-seven thousand eight hundred and thirty-one bond persons. In 1844 the population (not including that of Norfolk Island) had reached (having increased every year) one hundred and seventy-three thousand three hundred and seventy-seven, numbering one hundred and fifty-four thousand two hundred and two free and nineteen thousand one hundred and seventy-five bond per-

sons, of whom upwards of thirteen thousand held tickets of leave as convicts. In 1836 there were only thirty-nine females to every hundred males; in 1841, fifty; in 1843, sixty; and in 1844, sixty-three to every hundred males. The ordinary revenue of the colony in 1836 was 183,218*l.*, and in 1843 (the last return), it had amounted to 322,588*l.* The total extent of land sold in 1844 was four thousand three hundred and seven acres, the average price of which was 2*l.* 0*s.* 11¼*d.* an acre: it was only 6*s.* 3*d.* an acre in 1836. The total proceeds of land sold in 1844 were 8,818*l.* In 1843 the colonial revenue was 370,331*l.*, and the expenditure 369,398*l.*; the balance of account had then amounted from former years to 21,317*l.* In private banks there was in coin or bullion 453,914*l.*, and their liabilities were 1,147,290*l.* The deposits in savings banks amounted in 1843 to 149,871*l.*, and they had lent 30,892*l.* on bills and 120,205*l.* on land. The number of immigrants who arrived at the public expense in 1844 was four thousand one hundred and thirty-nine, and in 1843 the amount paid by the home government towards the maintenance of convicts was 63,046*l.*, and the amount paid by the colonial government for police and gaols in the same year was 72,431*l.* With regard to the trade of New South Wales, it had increased up to 1843, when the imports were 1,550,544*l.*; in 1844 they were only 931,260*l.*, whilst the value of the exports in the same year was 1,128,115*l.* There were one hundred and forty-five thousand six hundred and fifty-three acres in cultivation in 1843. In 1844 there were two hundred and sixty-five thousand seven hundred and four bushels of wheat imported, and of flour and bread four million three hundred and seventy thousand two hundred and forty pounds. The value of wool exported in 1844 was 645,344*l.* The export of tallow, which in 1843 was only

9,639*l.*, increased to 83,511*l.* in 1844. The number of vessels entered inwards in 1843 was five hundred and fifty-eight, and the tonnage one hundred and ten thousand three hundred and sixty-four; while in 1844 the number was four hundred and seventeen, and the tonnage eighty-seven thousand five hundred and thirty-nine. The number entered outwards was five hundred and sixty-four, and the tonnage one hundred and ten thousand and twenty-six, in 1843; and in 1844 the number five hundred and sixty-nine and the tonnage one hundred and nine thousand two hundred and forty-two. The total value of imports in 1843 was 1,550,544*l.*, and in 1844, 931,260*l.*; and the total value of exports was 1,172,320*l.* in 1843, and 1,128,115*l.* in 1844. The importation of grain in 1843 was to the value of 112,387*l.*, and in 1844 to the value of 65,442*l.*; while the value exported in those years was, respectively, 13,486*l.* and 12,232*l.* The last return of the live stock was in 1843, as follows:—horses, sixty-two thousand and seventeen; horned cattle, one million seventeen thousand three hundred and sixteen; and sheep, five million fifty-five thousand three hundred and thirty-seven.

When convicts ceased to be sent to New South Wales, the chief depôt for that dangerous export was an island, separated from the south-eastern extremity of the Australian continent by Bass's Straits, to which the discoverer, Tasman, in 1642, gave the name of Van Diemen's Land, after the Dutch governor-general of the Indies for the time; but which the better taste of its present inhabitants have called Tasmania, in honour of the famous navigator himself. Tasman, it should be recollected, was likewise the discoverer of New Zealand; and, to say nothing of the awkwardness of the former name, we owe him this cheap token of remembrance and

respect. For one hundred and thirty years after its discovery no mention is made of any other visit; but at length some English captains intruded upon its solitude, and Cook among the rest, in 1777. It was not, however, till 1803 that it was taken possession of by the British, as a dependency of the convict colony of New South Wales; and in the following year Colonel Collins arrived, as we have related, with an expedition from England, which had been destined for continental Australia.

From this period till 1813 the island was set apart as a place of transportation from New South Wales, and interdicted from holding communication with any other country, excepting England. It was not till 1816 that free colonists began to appear in any noticeable numbers; and the first important immigration took place in 1822. The appearance of the country was very seductive to the British settler, reminding him of the more picturesque parts of Scotland and Ireland; hills, and mountains wooded to the summit, with glens and vales between, presenting themselves in as great a succession as a length of two hundred and ten miles by a breadth of one hundred and fifty could give. The earth was rich in minerals, including iron, copper, lead, zinc, manganese, and, as reported, silver and gold. The plains were not numerous, but some were of considerable extent, and one six miles in length from two to three in breadth. The whole coast was indented with safe and capacious harbours; and thus in all important respects the country, with its fine climate, and, speaking comparatively with the Australian continent, its well-watered soil, appeared to be specially adapted for settlement.

In 1825 the colony was declared independent of New South Wales; and from that year to 1840 the population increased from twelve thousand seven hundred to

upwards of forty thousand—the number of acres in cultivation from twenty-five thousand to one hundred and twenty-four thousand—the colonial shipping from one vessel of forty-two tons to one hundred and forty-one vessels, comprising twelve thousand four hundred and ninety-one tons—the imports (chiefly of English goods, carried in English ships) from 62,000*l.* to 988,356*l.*—the exports from 14,500*l.* to 867,007*l.*, in which the wool alone amounted to 223,000*l.*—the colonial fixed revenue from 16,866*l.* to 118,541*l.*; and the sum of 218,790*l.* was between the year 1828 and the year 1840, inclusive, invested by the colonists in the purchase of crown lands.

During this period convict labour was supplied to the colonists on the assignment system of New South Wales; but the number of prisoners being small in comparison with the body of free settlers, they were at once dispersed over the country on disembarking, and thus the moral poison they brought with them being diluted, as it were, their influence on the state of manners was comparatively slight, and their own prospects of amendment almost certain. Such at least is the statement of the settlers; but the horrors of Macquarie Harbour, where the convicts who had relapsed into crime were condemned to work in chains, tell a different tale, and so also does the practice of bush-ranging, which has prevailed to a greater or less extent from the beginning of the colony till the present moment.

It may perhaps be safely enough laid down as a political axiom, that when a country is so densely peopled as to render it desirable to push forth colonies composed of its healthy classes, it should at the same time get rid of a portion of its criminals. The secret of success must lie in the proportions in which the two elements are mixed in a foreign settlement; but Tasmania was never meant

to exhibit the working of the principle: it was a convict colony at the outset. In 1822, when free settlers first began to flock in, the relative numbers were three thousand six hundred and sixteen to four thousand nine hundred and ninety-six; in 1824 and 1825 the numbers of bond and free were nearly equal; by 1829 the free settlers had attained a majority of about two thousand; and this rapidly and steadily increased, till in 1840 the colony had lost its exclusive character of a penal settlement, the number of convicts being only about half that of freemen, and not greater than the latter could employ as labourers and servants.*

In 1840 all this was suddenly at an end. Transportation from England to New South Wales was discontinued, and Tasmania was constituted the grand jail of the empire. The more desperate criminals were to be sent, in the first instance, to Norfolk Island, and thence, after a period of not less than three years, re-shipped to Tasmania; where all prisoners, whether direct or indirect, were to be kept in probationary gangs of two hundred and fifty or three hundred men, for at least one year, when, if found deserving, they were to receive permission to engage themselves as servants for wages. It may be doubted whether this is the best mode of avoiding the abuses, already described, of the assignment system. If it was absolutely necessary to destroy the rising hopes of the colony, and throw it back into the condition of a penal settlement, it would perhaps have been better to have introduced a rigorous reform into the plan of assigning convicts, rather than have depended upon the desperate chance of amendment in criminals condemned

* The above figures are taken on the authority of Mr. Martin; but it should be noticed that among the free population are included emancipated convicts, in a proportion which we are unable to ascertain.

to herd together for one or more years in one mass of contagion. However this may be, under the new system thirteen thousand seven hundred and sixty-four male convicts, and two thousand four hundred and ninety-two females were landed on the island between 1st January, 1841, and 31st October, 1844; and the result is stated to be an enormous increase of crime and misery. Twenty gangs of convicts of several hundreds each, are scattered throughout a country of about half the size of Ireland; and more than two thousand of those who are supposed to be sufficiently reformed to be entitled to tickets of leave, are unable to find employment. This state of things is very different from Sir James Graham's anticipation:—"The prisoner should be made to feel," said he, "that he enters on a new career. The classification of the convicts in the colony, as set forth in Lord Stanley's despatch, should be made intelligible to him. He should be told that he will be sent to Van Diemen's land, there, if he behave well, at once to receive a ticket of leave, which is equivalent to freedom, with the certainty of abundant maintenance, the fruit of industry." The experiment has been tried, and may be considered to have failed.

The aborigines of Tasmania were a modification of the race we shall have to advert to as roaming in small tribes over the deserts of Australia. The island variety resembled negroes more than their brothers of the continent; but the question is now of little consequence, as after their ranks had been thinned by disease, famine, and the musket, the few survivors were transported some years ago to Flinder's Island in the neighbouring Straits.

CHAPTER IV.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA—SOUTHERN AUSTRALIA—NORTHERN AUSTRALIA.

When the prosperity of New South Wales and Tasmania was as yet uninterrupted by those temporary checks, as the future historian will regard them, which appear so alarming and calamitous to us men of the day, its career received an additional impulse from the foundation of a new settlement. The Tasmanians, as their hopes expanded, found their own island too small, and great numbers migrated with their flocks and herds to the opposite coast, the south-east point of New South Wales, where they were speedily joined by the enterprising settlers of Sydney, who drove their sheep and cattle overland, to share in the almost limitless pastures of Port Phillip. The enterprise being conducted, not by settlers from Europe, but by experienced colonists, was instantly and eminently successful; and was probably one of the chief causes which led to the settlement of Swan River on the south-western coast.

Some capitalists made an offer to government to invest 300,000*l.* in colonizing the district, on condition of receiving a grant of four million acres of land, out of which they were to provide *every* male emigrant with two hundred acres free of rent. This offer was not accepted, but it had the effect of drawing attention to the subject; and in 1829 a colony of free emigrants was planted, consisting chiefly of the middle classes, land being assigned at the rate of forty acres for every 3*l.* expended, and the adventurers being conveyed to their destination at their own expense. This was, of course, a colony of gentry, all anxious to become great esquires at so trifling an outlay; and the surveyed lands fit for agricultural purposes were found to be too limited in extent for the influx of claimants. Those who could not wait went on to the penal colonies, while the persevering or comparatively rich remained behind, to form the nucleus perhaps of a great nation.

The period of mistakes, follies, and misfortunes, lasted for about three years; during which some were half-ruined, some half-starved, and none probably found much use for their carriages, pianofortes, and blood-horses. At length they contrived to preserve some imported sheep for their wool, instead of devouring them as they had done while money was plenty; and having thus found an article of export, their course was clear. Their advance, however, has been rather steady than brilliant. They are as yet neither great consumers nor great producers; but they have formed a permanent settlement in a great and unoccupied country, and they bide their time.

The settlement lies between the parallel of 31° and 35° south latitude, and extends eastward to the 129° of longitude, and is thus one thousand two hundred and eighty miles in length, and eight hundred in breadth.

Three distinct ranges of mountains run parallel with the sea coast, giving off numerous streams of greater or less magnitude besides the Swan River, from which the colony takes its name. The coast itself is deeply indented with bays and headlands, islands and straits, among which are some of the finest harbours in the world; while towards the south-west there are a series of estuaries with narrow and shallow entrances, and in length from five to ten miles by two or three broad. The climate is said to be healthy, and more especially adapted for invalids labouring under pulmonary complaints. The soil is not rich, yet sufficiently productive in its natural state. Food, therefore, is plentiful, including abundance of fruit at certain seasons of the year; and even the wandering natives, who live only from day to day, have little difficulty in procuring subsistence.

The Swan River colonists who, at the first disappointment, had carried their capital to New South Wales and Tasmania, were sufficiently numerous to be felt in the growing prosperity of these settlements. They were of a class which does not work, and their presence, therefore, contributed, with other circumstances, to raise the price of labour. In Tasmania, convicts were in such demand that the humourist who described them as being hired by means of a speaking trumpet before they left the ship hardly exaggerated the fact. As for free labour, it was not to be had in any of the Australian colonies but at a price which would materially diminish the profits of the employer, then on the high road to fortune; and the exclamation rose simultaneously from every moneyed lip,—"Oh, that we could get servants as cheap as in England!" A whole world of wealth seemed before them if they had only labourers to gather it in. Flocks,

herds, metals, fisheries, corn, wine—all were theirs; but unhappily the cheap drudges were wanting with which England was blessed—the slaves of the soil, the gnomes of the mine, whose wages were fixed at the exact point which gave them strength to labour, and to whom no other choice was left but the workhouse or the jail. Servants as cheap as in England! They forgot that their poorer brethren had travelled to the antipodes for the express purpose of escaping from their dreary fate at home, and that such a cry from the lips of men who had performed the same journey to extort an enormous and unaccustomed profit from a capital certainly not more intrinsically respectable than labour, was both a folly and a dishonesty.

They knew very well that the only way to make labour cheap was to glut the market—to render it what merchants call a drug; and having succeeded in indoctrinating the Government at home, the plan we have incidentally mentioned in treating of New South Wales was determined to be tried on a magnificent scale. A colony was laid down on the map, extending from the southern shores of Australia to the tropic of Capricorn, and laterally from the Port Phillip territories of New South Wales on the east, to the limits of the Swan River settlement on the west; and the whole of this vast area of one hundred and thirty-two million acres was put up for sale at a fixed minimum rate, the entire proceeds to be expended *in conveying labourers from Great Britain.* No restrictions were made as to the parties purchasing. The Englishman who never left his fireside at home might become the possessor of an estate in South Australia; and this estate he might commit to the management of other hands — or not manage at all: the object was gained

when the money's worth of British labour was exported to that new country where the harvest was rotting in the absence of the sickle.

The pioneers of the colony reached their promised land in 1837, and the stream of immigration continued uninterrupted for three years. The chief occupation of the labourers was, at first, the erection of the buildings in Adelaide, the capital of the province; difficulties having occurred, and time having been wasted in getting possession of the estates. There was no want of subsistence, however, in the mean while, for they had plenty of money, and New South Wales plenty of food to exchange for it; and so far from having any fears for the future, the chief business of the new colonists was speculating in the purchase and sale of the lands they had come out to cultivate. While the stream of capital continued to flow in from Europe all went well; but after a time it was requisite to strike the balance between receipts and expenditure within the colony, and the profits were found to be so very minute that immigration was at once checked, the price of land fell as suddenly as it had risen, private buildings were discontinued, and the labourers were employed on public works by the humanity of the governor, as the only means left of preserving them from utter starvation.

The pastures were of small extent, and those who had invested their capital in flocks and herds did well; while the land speculators, having no more money to buy provisions, were driven to cultivate the soil. More grain was raised than the colony could use; and they fattened their sheep with it, to boil them down for tallow after the fleeces were collected, and even tried the distant and restricted market of England: but a staple export was wanted to give stability to the infant settlement—and

this at length made its appearance. Metallic ores were discovered near the town of Adelaide, and it was soon found that the country was rich in metals. The fortune of South Australia was therefore made after the one brief reverse we have mentioned; and at this moment the great complaint is the want of ships to carry away its produce. "We believe we are speaking within compass," says a local paper of recent date, "when we declare our belief, that on the surface alone of the last discovery there exist masses of ore sufficient to freight fifty large vessels, and that this province presents a field for the legitimate employment of capital to an extent and with a certainty altogether unprecedented, as there is no doubt that metalliferous ranges from Cape Jervis, south, to the Gulf of Carpentaria, north, will continue in an uninterrupted line through the whole of our natural boundary." Adelaide was last year constituted a free port, dues of every kind being abolished; and vessels will no longer have to complain either of want of cargoes or heavy expenses.

The misfortunes impending over New South Wales were expedited by the transactions of that province with South Australia. The purchases of the new colonists stimulated still further production at a time when over-production and speculation of every kind were raging in New South Wales. Although only a portion of the proceeds of the land sales were there applied towards immigration, it had the effect of bringing more settlers than could obtain legitimate employment for their capital or labour; and the morbid excitement and fictitious prosperity thus occasioned were suddenly checked by a large increase in the upset price of land, while the demand for provisions from South Australia was as suddenly discontinued. A reaction then came from which the

colony has not yet entirely recovered. Many of the later emigrants from England returned home; but this can hardly be reckoned a misfortune, as they no doubt left behind the more persevering or the more wealthy.

South Australia appears destined to discover the great secret of the interior of the continent. Unremitting efforts, but conducted on a singularly insignificant scale, have been made to penetrate from the settlement into the tropical regions, though as yet with little success. Captain Sturt, however, the chief explorer, is full of hope; and the following sentences from his last report will show the state of the question at present.

"At about six miles from the hills we entered a scrub, and at seven miles found a supply of water in a small creek, but none afterwards. Soon after entering the scrub, we got into a country alternating, as before, with long narrow flats and sandy ridges, but they were here destitute of cypresses; and this kind of country continued to the hills, which we reached at sunset. We could see nothing from their most elevated point but a universal scrub. From the south-west to the north-east the horizon was unbroken, and the view, direct to the north, was over as gloomy and as forbidding a region as man ever gazed upon. Both on our way to these hills, and on our return from them, we experienced the most oppressive heat among the ridges of sand. The wind blew in our faces with the constancy and intensity of a hot blast from a furnace, insomuch that we had a difficulty in breathing so rarefied an atmosphere. My observations and reckoning placed me in latitude 28° 11′ 15″, and at this point my horse failed. I therefore took him out of the cart, and walked to a distance of from twelve to thirteen miles, as I wished, if possible, to pass the twenty-eighth meridian. I was then nearly abreast of Moreton Bay,

in point of latitude, more than two hundred miles to the westward of the Darling, and in longitude 141° 22′, as near as I could judge; and yet, as I looked round me from the top of a small sand-hill I had ascended, I could see no change in the terrible desert into which I had penetrated. The horizon was unbroken by a single mound, from north round to north again, and it was as level as that of the ocean. My view to the north extended about eight miles, but I did not venture to compass that distance, only perhaps to have overlooked a similar heartrending and desolate scene. I returned from this excursion with the full conviction on my mind, that I had twice been within fifty, perhaps thirty, miles of an inland sea. It was, in truth, impossible that such a country as that into which I had penetrated, from which the very birds of the air shrank away, should continue much further; but whether such really was the case, remains yet to be ascertained."

The boundary of New South Wales was originally laid down on the map between the parallels of 36° and 28° south latitude; but its actual limits appear to be quite indefinite on the north, while on the south it may be said to adjoin South Australia by means of the settlement of Port Phillip. In the former point the enterprising colonists are pushing out their locations towards the tropic, and already there are sheep stations in the vicinity of Wide Bay in latitude 25°. It was intended that this northern portion should have been made a separate colony, with the seat of government at Moreton Bay, and the project will eventually have to be resumed. The soil is prodigiously rich, not merely as compared with that of the rest of the continent, but with any other soils in the world; and the mountains, sometimes exceeding six thousand feet above the level of the sea, being

near the coast, the alluvial lands are well watered. At present they are covered for the greater part with forest trees of the most beautiful foliage, including the red and white cedar, the mahogany, rosewood, and tamarind (all totally different from the American trees of the same name), ironwood, lightwood, cork, and a fig tree which, from being a mere creeper, swallows up its support however gigantic, and occasionally attains such a size, we are told by Mr. Hodgkinson, as to entitle it to rank among the largest vegetable productions in the world. This "brush," as the forest is absurdly called by the settlers, will gradually disappear before the increasing population; and the northern colony produce all the treasures of the tropics.

The mountain range continues along nearly the whole eastern coast, and for a thousand miles a vast sea-wall, called the Barrier Reefs, protects the mariner from the swell of the Southern Ocean. Within this extraordinary bulwark the seas are broken with islands and shoals, but their bosom is as calm as a lake; while the wild but harmless roar of the breakers of the Pacific is heard in the distance.

At the extreme north, where the Australian continent meets the Indian Archipelago, Great Britain already possesses a settlement, although as yet nothing more than a naval station. The exploration of Cook ended about the north-east point of the coast, and it was not till the commencement of the present century that the survey was resumed. In 1818 (when Europe had recovered breath after her frantic wars) it was continued, and in the three subsequent years completed; several large rivers together with the harbour of Port Essington being discovered—the latter equal, if not superior, Lieutenant King declared, to any he ever saw, and from its proximity

to the Moluccas, and its being in the direct line of communication between Sydney and India, as well as from its commanding situation with respect to the Torres Straits, destined at no very distant period to become a place of great trade and very considerable importance. In 1824 a settlement was tried at Melville Island, which proved unfortunate; and in 1827 another at Raffles Bay, a few miles eastward of Port Essington, which was removed in the midst of every prospect of success, from the idea that a commercial intercourse with India could be carried on as well from Swan River. By-and-by, however, the tide of emigration set in so strongly to the south, east, and west, that the attention of government was again drawn to the north; and their deliberations being hastened by the intelligence that the French were about to plant themselves on these coasts, between our Indian and Australian possessions, Sir J. J. Gordon Bremer was hurried out to settle the question by occupation. Fortunately Mr. Earl was appointed linguist to the expedition; and to him the public owes a brief but very interesting account of its progress, with general observations on these colonies displaying his usual acuteness and intelligence.

This little settlement was founded at Port Essington in 1838; and its good effects became immediately visible in the safety with which vessels were now able to navigate the Torres Straits, which before were swarming with pirates. The intercourse with the eastern islands has in consequence become more free; and our traders are daily adding to their knowledge of ports which, however individually insignificant, are highly important in the aggregate to Great Britain. "The merchant," says Mr. Earl very justly, "loses sight of his goods after they reach Singapore, for even his consignee in that emporium of the farther east, has only a vague notion of what

becomes of a large portion of them. He knows that they are carried away to the eastward by hundreds of small craft, which return in course of time laden with produce, but of the particular countries from whence it comes he does not often know even the name."

Northern Australia has not as yet been explored to any considerable extent inland, but, so far as we know, it resembles in general character the eastern coast. It possesses, however, a peculiar and most interesting feature, which may be alluded to in reference to the expeditions we have mentioned into the interior of the continent. This is the Gulf of Carpentaria, which forms a basin for the reception of so vast a body of inland waters, dispersed in separate streams or courses, that during the rainy season fresh water is obtained by mariners, when as yet the low land is hardly visible from the deck. It has been conjectured that these are the mouths of some mighty river which, after disgorging the waters of the interior, become partially closed, like those of the Indus, in the dry season. The delta, as we may term the head of the gulf, of this supposed river, consists of accumulations of alluvial soil covered with rich herbage, extending as far as the eye can reach, and has been appropriately called Plains of Promise.

The settlement of Port Essington has not as yet been thrown open to the colonist; but the period is probably not distant when the pursuits of agriculture will be combined in that region with the protection of commerce. The inquiry will then come as to the quarter whence labourers may be obtained, for in such a climate Europeans must work more with the head than the hands. Mr. Earl is of opinion that India, China, and the Archipelago itself, would furnish a cheap and exhaustless supply; and he advocates a mixture of the three races as

less likely to lead to combination; but we cannot help thinking, that if the colony is ever formed on an eligible footing, the spontaneous outpouring of the Chinese nation, to which we have adverted in another place, will settle the question.

But the natives?—the *proprietors* of the continent! We fear there is no fate for them but to be driven before the advance of civilization, and annihilated in its inevitable tide. They will one day have existence only in history, just as the extinct animals of former ages can now be traced only in the stone monuments of geology. This is a terrible thought: but we fear it is true. A family dies; a tribe passes utterly away; and in these dispensations the designs of Providence, if duly considered, are not less inscrutable than when the sentence is pronounced against a tongue or nation. Civilization is the natural state of man, to which the world is advancing with the stride of a giant. Those wild races, whether of men or animals, which are incapable of being reclaimed will eventually perish; and the doom of the Australian savage, more especially, appears to be pronounced by Nature herself. She gave him no grain—not a seed that could attach him to the field where it grew; no banana, no bread-fruit, to suggest to him to build a home in their consecrating shadow. Gaunt, naked, and forlorn, he prowls through his interminable deserts, to feed on the kangaroo, which, being as untameable as himself, will vanish like him from the face of the earth. His other food is the gum that exudes from his trees, to which nature has denied fruit even while endowing them with perennial beauty. This is his substitute for bread, which he prefers to the root of the gigantic fern (a legacy from the extinct world of geology), and he adds to it, when he would indulge in a delicacy, and is fortunate

enough to be able to procure one, a snake, a few grubs, or a handful of locusts. Thus he has no home, and no habits of foresight such as usually distinguish human beings from the lower animals. Like the lily, he sows not, neither does he spin; he is a pensioner on the bounties of the passing day; and when he lies down in his wild lair at night, his meditations are undisturbed by the thought that in the morning he must begin the world anew.

But he has a country, notwithstanding; for each tribe has its own territory, whence it derives its subsistence, and which it defends from the rest. This circumstance hastened the doom of the Tasmanian savages, whose grounds were comparatively small; for the encroachments of the whites driving the tribes back one upon another, gave rise to conflicts, which, with the aid of the Europeans themselves, would at once have exterminated the race had not the few survivors been removed by government. But the above, it must be observed, is only a general picture. The tribes on the north-eastern coast are much less wild; and in many parts of the country their food, however peculiar, is abundant. Their hatred, however, of the white man appears to be an instinct; for no kindness, however long-continued, and however gratefully received in appearance, can make them cease to be his enemies. They are not merely different from each other in manners but in personal appearance, some being of a copper complexion, and some jet black, with the complete negro head excepting the woolly hair. Nay, they differ even in language; and thus one is led to ask whether we do not see in this great country the fragments of various nations?

Their manners have been too frequently described to be now susceptible of any interest; but we may men-

tion as perhaps the strongest evidence of their real status in regard to civilization, that the marriages of most of the tribes are performed by the lover stealing upon his inamorata unawares, beating her upon the head with a club till she is senseless, and then dragging her by one arm to his lair.

The infant empire of Australia is of much more consequence to England than might be supposed from the small amount of the population. In other colonies the proportion of her manufactures consumed by each individual is 1*l.* 14*s.* 6*d.* per annum, while here the proportion is at least 7*l.* Such considerations render the improvement of the mode of communication with so remote a corner of the globe a subject of great interest; and it is to be hoped that one of several schemes now proposed will speedily be adopted.

BOOK X.

SOUTHERN AFRICA, AND THE ISLANDS OF THE INDIAN AND SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEANS.

CHAPTER I.

THE ISLANDS OF THE INDIAN OCEAN—THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

Near the western side of the mighty expanse of water which separates Australia and the southern islands of the Archipelago from the African continent, there lie some islands which form a portion of the astonishing empire of Great Britain, and some which are so intimately connected with her political and commercial interests as to demand at least a passing notice.

Mauritius is of nearly a circular figure, about one hundred and fifty miles in circumference, and contains an area of four hundred and thirty-two thousand six hundred and eighty acres. It was discovered in 1507, and named Cerné by the Portuguese navigator Mascarenhas; but when the Dutch visited it in 1598 it was still uninhabited, except by some hogs, goats, and monkeys left by the rival nation, and taking possession, they called the

island Mauritius in honour of the Prince of Orange. This, however, was not immediately followed up by any attempt to colonize, although for about half a century preceding 1712, there appears to have been a Dutch settlement at Grand Port. In that year they abandoned the island altogether, and in 1721 it was occupied by the French who gave it the name of Isle of France; although till 1735 it was merely used as a refreshment station for ships of the French East India Company. In the latter year, however, an energetic governor introduced the sugar cane and the manufacture of cotton and indigo, and in a comparatively short time gave form and regularity to the infant colony.

It is unnecessary to pursue the history of Mauritius under the French domination further than to say, that in the early part of the present century it became the grand rendezvous for all the enemies, both open and masked, of the British commerce in the east. It was there privateers were fitted out under the agency of Americans; who bargained beforehand, it is said, for the produce of the cruise, and gravely sent back both the hull and cargo of the prize to our own settlements. A stop to this was at length put in 1810; but it is curious to notice that the reduction of the island was planned by the Marquess Wellesley ten years before, and that if circumstances had not pressed in Europe, his great brother, who was to have commanded the expedition, would in all probability have quietly subsided into the governor of Mauritius and Bourbon. But France had by this time a Napoleon, and the world demanded a Wellington: and so the famous Arthur Wellesley carried his Indian laurels to the bloody fields of the Peninsula. In 1810 Mauritius submitted to the arms of England, and at the peace of 1814 the acquisition was ratified by the treaty of

the allied powers, and the island, losing its French name as well as its French government, became a colony of the British empire.

Mauritius is intersected by ranges of mountains from one thousand eight hundred to two thousand eight hundred feet high, which rise from the coast towards the centre of the island. They are in general richly wooded almost to the top, and the character of the whole landscape is picturesque and romantic to a very high degree. The coast is indented with an infinite variety of bays, coves, and promontories; and the whole surrounded by a bank of coral a quarter of a league from the shore. The climate is salubrious although subject to hurricanes; and the soil of the valleys as rich as might be anticipated from the supposed volcanic origin of the island. The principal production is sugar, which is now cultivated by means of hill-coolies from India, who make up for the deficient labour of the former slave population, whose number was fifty-six thousand six hundred and ninety-nine. The quantity of sugar has increased from ten million pounds in 1825 to at least eight times that amount; but the cultivation of coffee, indigo, cotton, &c., though all of excellent quality has proportionally declined, and even the export of ebony has been partially abandoned for speculations in sugar. The rapid increase of this branch of commerce is owing to the island having been admitted in 1825 to those privileges which have only recently been accorded to India. In that year the discriminative duties charged in England upon Mauritian goods were abrogated, and the trade placed as nearly as possible upon the same footing as that of the West Indies. Mr. M'Culloch states that the hill-coolies are enticed away from India "by the same arts that were employed to entice the blacks from Africa, and are substantially

slaves;" and this was in some degree true even at the last date of his excellent Dictionary of Commerce, 1844. But the government of Mauritius at length thinking fit —though only under compulsion of the Press—to attend to the proper regulation of the "coolie-trade," as originally planned by the home government, a very satisfactory change has taken place, and at present the system appears to work well for all parties.

Dependent upon the government of Mauritius are, numerous islands, of which the Seychelles, Rodrigues and Diego Garcia are the most important. Rodrigues lies three hundred miles to the east, and is eighteen miles long and three or four in breadth, with only nine thousand acres of arable land. The Seychelles, forming an archipelago of thirty small islands, are nine hundred and fifteen miles to the north. The most considerable is Mahé, with a circumference of seventy-five miles, and a population of about six thousand inhabitants; but many others are merely *flower-pots,* resting beneath Italian skies, on a sea as smooth as an inland lake. Some are uninhabited, and some present a single family party, of French or Portuguese descent, where four generations may be seen sitting round the same table spread with eggs, fowls, milk, and fruit. Mr. Martin may well declare that "cruising about this beautiful archipelago is more like romance than reality." The productions of the Seychelles are cotton, spices, coffee, tobacco, rice, maize, and cocoa-nuts, which the inhabitants carry in their numerous small vessels to Bombay, Mauritius, and Bourbon. They possess also a certain mysterious nut, which was found drifting on the shores of Malabar and the Maldives, and thence called coco de mer, before any one knew that it grew on two islets of the Seychelles. Each nut, we are told, sold for three or four hundred

pounds sterling, on account of some supposed medicinal virtues—and as far as flavour is concerned, it is indeed physic to the olfactory nerves of Europeans.

Between Mauritius and the African continent is the large and magnificent island of Madagascar, with which, unhappily, we have little to do in the present work. It is supposed by some to have been mentioned by Massoudi in the tenth century under the name of Phanbalou, as one of the places where the Arabs had already planted colonies; but Marco Polo, in the thirteenth century, is the first traveller who has attempted any description of it. Even his intelligence appears to have been obtained at second hand, and his account resembles a page of the Arabian Nights. Among the monsters are boars as large as buffaloes, and the roc, a bird so powerful as to take up an elephant in the air, and kill him by letting him drop. Madagascar was discovered by the Portuguese in 1506, but it was not till the seventeenth century that the French attempted to colonize it; an attempt which, after a great expenditure of money, failed, owing to the unconquerable fierceness of the inhabitants. In the latter part of the next century a colony was actually founded, and with great prospects of success, by Count Benyowski; but the jealousies of the Mauritian government interposed, and this famous adventurer was killed in defending himself against French troops. The recent history of the island is not as yet worth relating; for the extravagant pretensions of the natives have produced a collision with the Europeans of which the result is unknown.

Madagascar is separated from the African coast by the channel of Mozambique, but the British colony of the Cape of Good Hope is a considerable distance to the south, occupying the extreme projection of the continent.

It is embraced on three sides by the Atlantic, the Southern, and the Indian Oceans, and the landward boundary is the Gariep or Orange River, and the unexplored expanse beyond. The area of this great territory is estimated at two hundred thousand square miles, and the length of its sea coast at one thousand two hundred miles.

When the Portuguese navigators, in exploring the African coast, found populous countries in the torrid zone instead of the uninhabitable deserts of the old geographers, they were encouraged to persevere; but when the land, instead of extending interminably to the west, as the ancients believed, appeared to bend inwards, they were inspired with extraordinary curiosity as to what might lie beyond. It appeared not improbable that if this easterly trending of the coast continued, they might be in the true path to India itself; and in the year 1486 two small vessels actually passed a tempestuous cape, to which the adventurers gave the name of Cabo dos Tormentos, and anchored in a bay at some distance beyond. The tired and terrified crew refused to proceed further, and the commander, Bartholomew Diaz, constrained to yield, contented himself with landing on a small island, planting thereon a cross, and receiving the sacrament at its foot. On his return to Portugal the king changed the name of this cape of storms to the Cape of Good Hope; and in 1497 Vasco de Gama realized the presage by sailing beyond it to the shores of India.

The Portuguese did not attempt any settlement, but their vessels frequently touched on the coast for supplies, —not forgetting, perhaps, the little island of Diaz, Santa Cruz, in Algoa Bay. In 1614 the English landed with the view of planting a convict colony on an island in

Table Bay, but they were prevented by the natives of the mainland ; and in 1620 formal possession was taken, though without occupation, in the name of James I. At length, in the year 1652, the Dutch sent out a small body of settlers from the houses of industry of Amsterdam, under the superintendence of Van Riebeck, a surgeon, who had been struck with the advantages of the place while botanizing at the Cape on his way home from India; and he commenced his government by strictly enjoining his people to treat the natives with kindness and forbearance.

Notwithstanding that this colony was composed of such difficult elements as convicts, and idle and disorderly persons picked up in the streets, its progress was satisfactory, though beset with difficulties, from the outset. The rudeness of the soil—the wild beasts, which carried off not only their cattle but their children—and the wilder men, who haunted them at every step—might have daunted the resolution of a less persevering people. But the Dutch continued to plod on, slaying the four-legged, and propitiating the two-legged savages, and at length becoming masters of a wide extent of territory at the expense of some beads and brandy, by one of those purchases which white men regard as fair and honourable, while they look upon any desire expressed by their darker brethren to obtain European prices for their goods, as indicative of natural corruption and depravity.

The Dutch settlement continued to acquire form and substance, till the synthetical process was disturbed by the contagion of revolution, which spread from Europe even to these remote seas. The colonists were divided into orangemen and democrats ; the troops were almost in open mutiny ; and the expectation of a rising of the

slaves spread horror and alarm among the more peaceable inhabitants. At this juncture, in 1795, a small British force appeared in Simon's Bay, and marching towards Cape Town, attacked the Dutch troops strongly posted in the mountainous pass of Musenberg; and in consequence, no doubt, of their state of disorganization, drove them from a position which they ought to have held against a large army. The result was the capitulation of the Cape, of which the British took possession for the Prince of Orange; and in the following year a Dutch fleet which entered Saldanha Bay, with a view to the recovery of the colony, was blocked up by an English fleet accidentally at hand, and yielded at discretion. The British continued to hold the territory till 1802, when they relinquished this, as well as their other conquests from the Dutch, by the treaty of Amiens; but in 1806 (the war having been recommenced after a year's breathing time), they recaptured it on the 10th of January, after a slight resistance, when the Cape of Good Hope became permanently a British colony, the cession being formally made at the congress of Vienna in 1815.

The geographical features of the colony are strongly marked. The surface is traversed by distinct ranges of mountains running from east to west—that is to say being nearly parallel with the sea—and rising terrace-like as they retire towards the interior, with table lands between. From one of these ranges, with an average distance of ninety miles from the coast, all the large rivers descend which flow into the Indian ocean, while its northern slopes send forth the waters that form the Gariep. The first terrace is fertile and well watered; the second loftier and wilder, with beautiful vales intermingled with barren hills and sandy plains; and the third, subjected to the parching heat of the south-west winds, and remaining

for a considerable time without water, much more unfavourable than the others to vegetation. Farther in the interior, beyond the boundary of the colony, the country still continues to rise in terraces, with a sterile, rugged, and sandy soil, and a climate subject to extreme vicissitudes of heat and cold.

The Dutch found the promontory of Southern Africa, as far inland as the Orange river, inhabited by a race of men who came to be called Hottentots,—it is difficult to say for what reason, as there is no such word in any of the native languages. In these people, confined to the extreme point of the African continent by the negro tribes of the interior, we recognize, with astonishment, the features and general appearance of the Tartars of eastern Asia. Barrow thinks they must have been originally Chinese; and Moffat likewise considers that they approach nearest in the colour and construction of their features to that people than to any other nation. They are not black nor even swarthy, but of the sallow colour of the Chinese, and as in these a tinge of red may sometimes be detected in the fairer complexions.

The Hottentots Proper occupied only the more fertile portions of the country, while the ruder districts between, more especially towards the north, were tenanted by Bushmen, an inferior tribe of the same race. Mr. Pringle doubts whether the Bushmen existed previous to the occupation of the country by Europeans, supposing it more probable that they are merely Hottentots converted into outlaws and refugees by the encroachments of the whites; but however barbarous the conduct of the Dutch may have been, there is no question that the same causes of degradation were and are at work, and to a vastly greater extent, in the savage wars of the natives, and in the pressure of the tribes of the interior upon those

nearer the sea. But in whatever way it may be accounted for, it seems to be certain that here and there portions of the Hottentot nation fell gradually off from the mass, and sunk from the pastoral state into that of hunters and pensioners on the spontaneous bounties of the earth. Such men carried nothing with them into the fastnesses of their rocks and deserts but the national assigai and poisoned arrow, and in the almost necessary pursuance of what would seem to be their destiny were transformed into robbers. This process, it may well be supposed, was not stopped but expedited by the arrival of the Dutch convicts; and thus, says Pringle, "on the outskirts of our ever advancing frontier, numerous wandering hordes of destitute and desperate savages—the South African 'Children of the Mist'—have been constantly found in a state of precarious truce or of bitter hostility with the colonists."

The Hottentots and Bushmen although of the same race, do not understand the language of each other, and what is more extraordinary at first view, each Bushman tribe has a dialect of its own. The process by which this curious result of separation is produced, is described by Moffat. In the isolated villages of the desert, he tells us, there are no meetings, no society, by means of which the integrity of the language may be preserved. It is the sole care of the people to keep soul and body together, and for this purpose the adults of the tribes are frequently compelled to be long absent in excursions through the wilds. "On such occasions, fathers and mothers and all who can bear a burden, often set out for weeks at a time, and leave their children to the care of two or more infirm old people. The infant progeny, some of whom are beginning to lisp, while others can master a whole sentence, and those still further advanced, romping and

playing together, the children of nature, through the live-long day, become habituated to a language of their own. The more voluble condescend to the less precocius, and thus from this infant Babel, proceeds a dialect composed of a host of mongrel words and phrases joined together without rule; and in the course of a generation the entire character of the language is changed."

The Bushmen, it may be supposed, having no country, no nationality, are confined within no territorial limits, but spread, wherever they can find refuge, into the regions beyond the original Hottentot domain. The Hottentots Proper, on the contrary, called either by that name, or Corannas or Namaquas, according to the quarter they inhabit, have distinct boundaries, drawn either by the desert or the frontiers of other nations.

The nations beyond are the Damaras on the north-east, extending it is supposed to the tropic of Capricorn. They are true negroes, and resemble the Congo tribes on the western coast. On the east and north-east the various Bechuana nations, among whom are the Kafirs, have few negro characteristics excepting the woolly hair. Their complexion is of a clear dark brown, and their features occasionally approach to the European type. One Kafir youth is described by a traveller as a model of juvenile beauty ; his figure displaying graceful ease and symmetry of proportion ; his broad forehead and handsome nose and mouth approaching the Circassian standard ; and the mild yet manly expression of his full black eyes and ingenuous open brow bespeaking confidence and good will at first sight.

Such were the tribes with whom the Dutch, and after them the English, came more immediately into contact. Some writers attribute without ceremony the dispersion of the Bushmen, the degradation of the Hottentots, and

the fierce hostility of the Kafirs to the aggressions of the colonists; while others refer everything to the intestine wars of the natives themselves, and absolve both Dutch and English from having had any hand in their ruin. Both views would appear to be erroneous, even from the facts presented by the theorists themselves. It is evident that from some cause or other, quite unconnected with the intrusion of a few Hottentot refugees, an extraordinary movement has long been in progress among the tribes of the interior, who are described as dashing one upon the other like the waves of a tempestuous sea. It is computed that in 1822, twenty-eight Bechuana tribes, consisting of three hundred and eighty-four thousand souls, were dispersed or destroyed by the Zoolahs; while up to this moment the same work goes on at no great distance from the northern frontiers of the colony. Compared with such horrors the social oppression of the Dutch and the military tyranny of the English sink into insignificance; but that is no argument against the existence of that oppression and that tyranny. Indeed, if a fact stated by respectable authorities be correct, the English are not very far behind the Zoolahs. It would appear from this that a tribe of twenty thousand souls, dispossessed and converted into banditti by the latter, approached the British territory in their predatory wanderings and excited great consternation. They at length, however, turned away, and "appear to have taken possession of a tract of country on the Umlata river, about two hundred and fifty miles from our frontier, on the eastern confines of the Amatemba territory, with the view, probably, of fixing themselves there permanently; for they are described by an eye-witness in 1828 as having constructed huts, cultivated the ground, and being actually located with their wives and children.

In this spot they were attacked and destroyed by the British troops under circumstances which seem strongly to demand investigation, for if the account given by the Rev. Mr. Kay in his recent work may be relied upon, this unhappy horde which, however guilty towards others, were blameless towards the colony, were massacred unresistingly, without warning and without mercy."*

The Dutch found the Hottentots a comparatively numerous people, living in pastoral ease and simplicity, surrounded by their flocks and herds. Though indolent and careless they were far from being destitute of spirit; maintaining an obstinate conflict with the first colonists, and entirely frustrating the previous attempt of the Portuguese to settle in Cape Bay. But they could not resist the temptation of the beads and brandy—to say nothing of the enforcement of the firelock; and as new adventurers flocked out from Holland, animated by the success of the others, it was necessary for them also to obtain lands and cattle to stock them. Cattle, corn, and wine were the only riches of the country, and for all these *land* was necessary. The Hottentots were not a few tribes of wandering savages, like the Americans or Australians, but a people who had settled down to tend their flocks and herds. The land, therefore, was their property—and very speedily it became the property of the Dutch. Without fields, how could they keep cattle? Their cattle belonged to the Dutch. Without land or cattle, how could they subsist? They became the servants of the Dutch.

At the commencement of the century, these "servants" —for the Dutch laws would not permit them to be *enslaved*—are described by Barrow as being "treated

* Pringle's Narrative, p. 232—3; Bannister's Humane Policy, p. 150; Kay's Researches in Caffraria, p. 328.

more like brute beasts than human beings." "When a Hottentot," says he, "offended any boor or booress, he was immediately tied up to the waggon wheel and flogged in the most barbarous manner. Or if the master took a serious dislike to any of the unhappy creatures, it was no uncommon practice to send out the Hottentot on some pretended message, and then to follow and shoot him on the road." As for the Bushmen, at a much later period, they were stalked like deer, and brought down with bullets without the smallest ceremony. Captain Perceval (in 1804) remarks that the opinion was generally entertained at the Cape, that in point of understanding the Hottentots scarcely deserved to be deemed to rank with human beings; and when he asked a Dutchman any question concerning them, "he looked as if he thought the subject too contemptible to deserve an answer." The farmers, according to the same authority, assembled at particular places with dogs to hunt the Bushmen, "and whenever they are surprised by the Dutch a cruel massacre never fails to ensue."

Lazy and stupid as the Hottentots are described to be, this treatment provoked retaliation, and an insurrection occurred on the eastern frontiers, which was not at an end by the time of the second occupation of the English in 1806. The insurgents were now pacified, partly by persuasion and partly by force, and many of them returned to their former masters, with whom their wives and children still remained; while a considerable number entered a native regiment, which formed a corps seven hundred strong, described by a military observer as being in general well disciplined, soldier-like, faithful and brave. The frontier colonists were now in a position to have their revenge, and the atrocities committed upon the helpless Hottentots are represented as being unpa-

ralleled except by the horrors of negro slavery. In 1809 an English governor endeavoured to limit the power of the masters by a legislative act, but he only succeeded in embittering their animosity; and in 1811 circuit courts were established, which at first were quite ineffective, being composed of colonists. One of their sentences against a wealthy miscreant, who was convicted of shooting a Hottentot woman with a child in her arms, was to have a naked sword passed over his neck by the executioner! These courts, however, eventually did good. They disclosed what before was hidden in mystery; and even when their own decisions were partial or tyrannical, they subjected the criminal to the verdict of Public Opinion. Under this influence the condition of the degraded people began to improve; and at length, in 1828, the laws which bound them to a servitude, worse in actual effect than slavery, were repealed, and the Hottentots recognised as free subjects of Great Britain.

It is curious to observe the relative effect of slavery and freedom upon the human character. A settlement of those animals, next in intelligence to the brute beasts, was made upon the Kat river, government being at no further expense than furnishing them with a little seed corn, and with some arms to defend themselves from the Kafirs. The spiritless Hottentots beat off the warlike Kafirs, planted the fields with corn, lived when necessary upon wild roots and bulbs while it grew, increased to the number of four thousand souls, and without the aid of a single resident magistrate or police officer, exhibited the spectacle of a coloured community living in greater order and tranquillity than could be found at the seat of the district government. It is of these people that a comparatively friendly observer remarked, during the Dutch sway, that even hunger could not provoke them to be at

any trouble in procuring food, but that when it was procured they were disgustingly voracious—their only luxury consisting in eating, and their only enjoyment in sleep!

This picture, however, applies only to a portion of the Hottentots, for the transition had a very different effect upon the great bulk of the race. It is given, however, in order to *prove* that there is no obstacle, inherent in their character, to the civilization of the aborigines of the Cape, and to encourage the government and the colonists to repeated exertions in their favour. The principal law repealed was that which virtually condemned them to perpetual servitude, and thus chained them down in the position of an inferior and despised race. "Hottentots," says the law, "going about the country, either in the service of their masters, or on other lawful business, must be provided with a pass, either of the master under whom they serve or the magistrate of the district, under the penalty of being considered and treated as vagabonds; and every one is to ask a pass from any Hottentot that happens to come to his place, and in case of his not being provided with it, to deliver him up to the veld-cornet, land-rost or fiscal, in order to act as, after due inquiry, they should feel it incumbent to do." The immediate results of the repeal of this law, taking place as it did without precaution or preparation, were an alarming extent of vagrancy and crime; and it is stated by Mr. Chase, though we trust with much exaggeration, that the Hottentots are now "rapidly disappearing from the soil through intemperance and disease."

The manumission of the slaves in 1834—who amounted to thirty-six thousand, chiefly natives of Madagascar and the Indian Archipelago—was attended by similar results. Few remained with their employers whether they had been well or ill treated, and crops rotted on the ground

for want of hands to gather them in. The new freemen, crowded together in straw huts, celebrated their liberation in orgies which prepared the way for disease, and measles and smallpox more than decimated the heretofore labouring population.

As for the Hottentots they are no longer of importance except as a class of British subjects; but we are as yet only in the midst of our collision with the Kafirs. A nation of herdsmen, just as the former till lately were, the Kafirs yet appear to have begun, by their own unassisted efforts, to make more decided advances than their neighbours in civilization. Their villages are surrounded by fields, where the women cultivate grain and esculents; and the rite of circumcision (unconnected with Islamism) would seem to point to some inexplicable relationship with a far more northern people. There is little doubt that the hostilities between them and the Europeans were commenced by the aggressions of the Dutch. There was indeed a continual pressure upon the Hottentot country from the east; but this was exhibited more in the gradual absorption of the frontier tribes into the ranks of the intruders than by the exterminating wars of barbarians. At any rate, the first collision upon record took place in 1701, when a party of colonists marched across the eastern frontier, lived there by rapine for seven months, and returned with a large quantity of spoil in sheep and cattle. The notice taken of this exploit by the home government, was a despatch deploring such abominable robberies and murders, and regretting their inability to punish the delinquents. But the delinquents were not only unpunished but rewarded; for in 1778, finding many of the Dutch settlers located upon the Kafir frontiers, the governor, with very little ceremony, stretched the limits of the colony so as to include

its erratic children. This was resisted by the principal chiefs—the form of a treaty having been gone through with a few of minor importance—and the result was the mustering a "commando" by the Dutch, the massacre of the *treacherous* Kafirs, and the punishment of the rich by the confiscation of five thousand head of cattle! Occurrences of nearly the same kind took place on other parts of the same frontier, and scenes of horror were enacted, and extended over a period of many years, which have been detailed, and perhaps exaggerated, by several writers, but which would now excite more disgust than interest. The intruding Kafirs, to the number of twenty thousand souls (whose intrusion was a century old), were at length thrust back by the British, in 1811, beyond the Great Fish River.

In settling the new frontier, the English treated with a chief called Gaika, whose sovereign authority, as his European friends thought fit to consider it, was not acknowledged by the other chiefs. This led to great calamities; for in 1818 an intestine war having broken out among the tribes, the British Government of the Cape would needs interfere to assist their ally Gaika, and by means of a powerful expedition, mulcted the insurgents in cattle to the amount of between twenty and thirty thousand head. The frontier war now raged in earnest, and the enemy coming down in great force upon Graham's Town, a battle took place in which fourteen hundred Kafir warriors were slain.

Their chief, Makanna, was one of those splendid characters who appear from time to time to relieve and illumine the vulgar horrors of history. He was a prophet as well as a prince. He had formed the project of bending the minds of his countrymen to his ambitious and perhaps patriotic designs by means of a supernatural revelation;

and he was so successful that his return to the world is looked for to this day by the Kafir nation, with a Jewish devotion. In the mean time, however, Makanna seeing that all was lost, instead of hiding himself in his unfathomable deserts, took the resolution of the Affghan Dost Mahomed and walked alone into the camp of his conquerors. "People say," said he, "that I have occasioned the war—let us see whether my delivering myself up will restore peace to my country!" But the fine and chivalrous spirit which distinguishes the English in India was unknown in the brutal commands of the Cape—in which it is affirmed the *dress* of the Kafirs was fired at wherever it appeared, the soldiers not giving themselves the trouble to ascertain whether it covered a man or a woman. Makanna was sent prisoner to Cape Town, confined for some time in the common jail, and then transported to Robben Island to work in chains in the slate quarries, the associate of slaves and felons. Here acquiring the usual ascendency of genius over his fellows, he formed a plan of escape. He rose upon the guard and overpowered them, embarked his adherents in a boat, in which he entered himself the last man, and set sail for the coast. The overloaded vessel upset, and Makanna was seen clinging to a rock. Even at that moment the instincts of the leader prevailed over those of the man. His eyes were bent upon his followers, his voice animated their efforts as they struggled in the surge, and when a wave swept him into the abyss, the last cheer of the gallant Kafir was heard rising above the roar of the ocean.

It was now Gaika's turn. Three thousand square miles of his lost territory were at first constituted a neutral ground, and then openly taken possession of by his English allies; and in 1822 Gaika himself only missed being laid

hold of (it does not appear for what crime) by disguising himself in the mantle of one of his wives. Petty hostilities now went on at intervals till 1835, when, in consequence of some successful forays of the Kafirs, the border commotions were converted by the English into a national war. This was like the Chinese war—very bloody on one side. The governor in one of his despatches, states that he lost a hundred men and slew four thousand! "There have been taken from them," also, adds he, "besides the conquest and alienation of their country, about sixty thousand head of cattle, almost all their goats, their habitations every where destroyed, and their gardens and corn fields laid waste." All this was virtually declared by the home secretary to be robbery and murder, the "conquest resulting from a war in which, as far as he is at present enabled to judge, the original justice is on the side of the conquered, not of the victorious party." The territory was ordered to be restored.

It is unnecessary to include in this sketch the extra-colonial events that are only now in progress. The manumission of the slaves at the Cape, together with the total change of system—except in *public* wars—introduced by the British, disgusted so much the boers, or Dutch farmers on the eastern frontier, that they took the extraordinary resolution of marching in a body with their flocks and herds into Kafir-land. Their passage through the native tribes was attended by the horrors that might have been expected; and their present settlement in Natal, where in 1842 they encountered and defeated a large British force, and were with difficulty driven back from the coast, is still besieged by the original occupiers of the land.

CHAPTER II.

RECENT COLONIZATION, RESOURCES, AND COMMERCE OF THE CAPE.

The Marquess Wellesley in 1798 strongly urged upon government the policy of keeping possession of the Cape as a naval station—as an intermediate military depot to prepare their troops for the climate of India—and as a victualling rendezvous for the Company's fleets both outwards and homewards. He was of opinion that it was vain to expect the settlement to pay its expenses; "but I doubt," said he, "whether with the Cape in the hands of an enemy it would be possible for you to maintain your India trade or empire, unless you could acquire some other settlement on the southern coast of Africa." Since that time the increasing importance of British connection with the further east, and the rapid rise of a British empire in the new southern world, have added force to his arguments; while the development of the resources of the country have shown an excess of revenue over expenditure. But as for its expenses as a military depot, amount-

ing we believe to 206,000*l.* a year, these do not properly come into the colonial accounts, as they are incurred in guarding the whole eastern dominion; and in this point of view the station, from its greater cheapness of living, effects a saving to the nation, rather than otherwise, in the maintenance of troops.

From the year in which the Marquess wrote till 1802, the whole exports did not exceed 15,000*l*; and in 1803 a colonist asked in utter perplexity—" In what articles can we trade? what can we export? wherewith must we pay?" The British, on definitively taking possession, solved the difficulty by bringing up the exports from 58,684*l.*, the average in 1806-10, to 220,933*l.*, the average in 1823-4; and since then a comparatively slight but decided increase has been visible. In 1820 a body of 3,736 free emigrants were sent out from Britain at the expense of 50,000*l.* to government, and located on the territory next the Kafir frontier. After the usual interval of misfortune, filling here a space of three years as in South Australia, the settlement of Albany took root and flourished up to the Kafir inroad in 1834, which gave a temporary interruption to its prosperity.

" The natural resources upon which the inhabitants of the colony have to rely," say the Commissioners of Inquiry in 1829, " for the support of the stock we have mentioned, consist of the wild pasturage, extending over tracks of country by no means fertile. There are few places in the colony calculated for the production of artificial grasses, although, with good management, and a command of water, they are found to resist and survive the long droughts which are common at the Cape. The natural grasses abound with deleterious and astringent herbs, the taint of which is perceivable in the breath and milk of the cows, and which at certain seasons of the year

are destructive to the cattle. Change of pasturage is found to be the only remedy for the numerous diseases with which they are affected, and which are rendered more frequent and destructive by want of care, and protection from cold and wet weather. The north-eastern parts of the colony have been subject to the visitation of locusts, which are equally destructive to artificial as to natural pasturage." This, in a few words, enumerates the disadvantages of the Cape, with the exception of blight, or rust, to which the crops are subject to an extent not known in Europe.

The ravages of the locusts are chiefly in the northern and eastern districts. Their original country appears to be the sandy deserts of the north; whence, rising upon the wind in myriads, by the instinct of hunger, they sail in vast clouds in quest of food. The air is darkened by them for miles, and the rushing sound of their wings resembles the near dash of a mill-wheel. In the evening they alight, sometimes in masses several inches deep; and when they take the wings of the morning anew, no token is left of their supper but the grey earth instead of the verdant field or the blooming garden. Sometimes their expedition takes place before they are able to fly; and in this case they appear in a dark red column, perhaps a mile broad, rolling along in an unswerving direction. A rivulet is no barrier; a line of fire is extinguished by their forlorn hope, and the rest of the legion walk over their bodies; walls—houses—chimneys—all are climbed and surmounted; till at length arriving at a broad and rapid river, or the sea itself, the marauders—who have not left one blade of grass in their passage—plunge bravely in and disappear. All evils, however, have their compensations. Birds, beasts, reptiles, and men prey alike upon the general enemy. The natives grow fat

when there are plenty of locusts; and the inhabitants of the towns are seen hurrying out into the devastated fields with sacks and pack-oxen to gather in the animal harvest. The creatures are steamed, dried in the sun, winnowed (to deprive them of their legs and wings), and either put away in sacks or garnered on the barn floor in a heap. They resemble shrimps in taste, and are either eaten whole with salt, or pounded with water into a cold porridge. The locust-plague continues for several years at a time, and is said to make its appearance with some regularity about once in fifteen years.

The extraordinary exuberance of animal life in Southern Africa has been often a subject of admiration. "The arid deserts," says Pringle, "uninhabitable by man, furnish food and refuge to the ostrich and the serpent-eater; and in the tracks of death-like desolation, where even these solitary birds cannot find a fountain, life is still pouring forth from the inexhaustible womb of the parched yet pregnant earth: thousands of lizards and land-tortoises are seen crawling about, or basking on the rocks and stones, and myriads of myriads of ants are building their clay pyramids, or busily travelling to and fro, in long black trains across the sultry ground."

But the deserts themselves, it must be said, if we look for their type in the Great Karroo (which is three hundred miles long by seventy or eighty) are not mere plains of sand as in other parts of the same continent. They have a thin argillaceous soil, diversified with slaty hills, and traversed by numerous torrents; and they appear rather to be burnt up by the heat of the sun during the dry season than naturally unfit for vegetation; for no sooner does the rain begin to fall in the early spring than myriads of flowers rush into bloom, and the Alpine farmers in the neighbourhood hasten down from

their fields, that are still bound in the chains of winter, to pasture their flocks on the brief vegetation of the smiling desert.

There is a species of amphibious lizard found in some of the rivers from three to six feet long, but as harmless as the common lizard of the desert. Venomous serpents are numerous, such as the cobra-capella, puff-adder, and berg-adder; but their great enemy, the serpent-eater, or secretary-bird, is likewise at hand, who crushes them under the sole of his foot, or flies up with them into the air, and drops them upon the ground—as Marco Polo's roc does the elephants! In the animal kingdom are included the lion, the elephant, the leopard, the hyena and his relation the wild dog, the buffalo, the antelope, the quagga, and the baboon. The Cape leopard is peculiarly ferocious; but the hyena and wild dog are more destructive to the flocks. The buffalo is a most formidable animal; but his haunts, as well as those of the elephant, have been much circumscribed by the hunters.

The commission of inquiry states that notwithstanding the various diseases to which cattle are liable, from the effects of noxious herbage at certain seasons, the difficulty of obtaining water for them in the summer season, and the depredations of wild animals and of the border tribes, their number had more than trebled from the year 1806 to 1824. The increase still goes on, and on the eastern frontiers the Cape graziers have been the pioneers of the settlement, migrating farther and farther in quest of pasture, till they are now extensively settled in the Natal country. The butchers of Cape Town, it is said, send overland six hundred miles for slaughter cattle and sheep. Under all circumstances, the exportation of horns and hides may be expected to become a great business.

The Cape sheep is distinguished by its hairy fleece and the enormous accumulation of fat in the tail—sometimes amounting to twenty pounds weight. This kind of sheep, however, is now in progress of supersession by the saxo-merino breed, and a trade in wool has thus been commenced which promises to be of great importance to the colony. In 1824 the number of sheep of all kinds at the Cape was one million one hundred and ninety-two thousand three hundred and two; and in 1841 the returns were three million eight hundred and twenty-nine thousand eight hundred and seventy. Up to 1834 the exports of wool were under a hundred thousand pounds: at present they are a million and a half or about one-eighth part of the exports of the Australian colonies. In consequence of the rapid increase of colonial wool, the supplies Great Britain was in the habit of receiving from Germany (in 1836 amounting to nearly thirty-two million pounds!) have now greatly fallen off, and eventually the trade will perhaps be extinguished altogether. In order to show the vast industrial field there is before our Australian and Cape settlers and our Indian farmers, we may add on this subject that, independently of the fleeces of thirty-two million sheep of her own, Great Britain imports from fifty to sixty million pounds of wool per annum. The trade, notwithstanding, may still be said to be in its infancy, as it has gradually increased to that amount from nine hundred thousand pounds imported in the year 1800.

Goats are likewise a considerable stock at the Cape; and horses of a mixed breed are rising in numbers and value. These animals, it is said, are capable of bearing so much fatigue that a journey of one hundred and twenty miles on two successive days is a common occurrence. There are likewise swine, poultry of all kinds, and bees

on every farm. Besides wool, hides, and horns, the other principal exports are goat and sheep skins, salted beef, pork, and fish, aloes, ivory, tallow, flour, whale oil, whale bone, and wine.

The capital embarked in wine cultivation was said in 1843 to be nearly two millions sterling; and the quantity exported to England averages from five to six hundred thousand gallons. The liqueur wine, Constantia, is well known, or rather well talked about, for it is too scarce and too dear to be within the reach of more than a few; but, with this exception, the wines of the Cape, pronounced execrable by the first English conquerors, retain their character to the present day. It should not be said that they are entirely unimproved, for they have lost in some measure their peculiar earthy taste; but still they are so inferior to the wines of Europe that they are never seen upon the table —under their own name. It is curious that no one asks in parliament what becomes of the half million gallons which are imported, since there is not an individual of that august body who ever saw a bottle of "Cape Madeira" in his life! The fact is, the British Government could not conceive why we should not have as good wine from Southern Africa as from continental Europe, since it is well known that the grapes of the former country are among the finest in the world; and in order to encourage the colonists to turn their attention to the article, they gave them a discriminative duty of about fifty per cent. in their favour. The consequence is, that the same quality of wine continues to be made at the Cape, and imported into England; where, as nobody will drink it *pure*, the dealers are compelled to mix it with other wines, and sell it at twice its value. The difference of duty is thus taken out of the pockets of the people in another shape, and government pays it over again in the loss sustained by the revenue.

The trade with the Kafirs commenced in 1822, and in two years ivory and hides were received by the colonists, to the amount of nearly 30,000*l.* in exchange for beads, buttons, and brass wire. Commerce, however, had its usual effect; and having tasted of the fruit of knowledge, the eyes of the African barbarians were opened, and they saw that they wanted duffels, blankets, iron-pots, and other manufactures. The mother country, therefore, came to participate in the advantages of the trade, which, at the time of the outbreak in 1834, amounted to 40,000*l.* per annum in imports alone, for the value sent into Kafir land had not been ascertained. This traffic, of course, disappeared during the war and for some time after, but is now gradually recovering, and is at present estimated at about half the above amount. But the war was not without its advantages even so far as industry was concerned, for it released from Kafir slavery, and threw upon the British frontier, a people called Fingos, who supplied the most important desideratum of the colonists—labour. The Fingos numbered altogether about 10,000 souls, and proved to be a quiet, temperate, provident, and industrious race. Some of the tribes dispersed by the Zoolahs have likewise been found useful as herdsmen; and the phrensied tumults among the northern nations are perpetually driving refugees across the Gariep to take service with the colonists.

It is curious that Barrow, who wrote in 1798, is still the great authority as to the productive capabilities of the country. The tea plant thrives as well as in China; successful experiments have been tried with coffee; sugar, he tells us, would likewise succeed; and Percival (1804) mentions that the cane grows spontaneously in many parts of the colony. The soil is exactly suited to the mulberry; and "remembering wool, let it not be thought a rash expectation that Cape silk

will yet vie with China, India, Modena, or Valencia, or Brussa." Besides the common silkworm, Barrow mentions, likewise, a large moth nearly as large as the atlas, resembling the Indian insect which spins the strong silk known by the name of tussack. Cotton, indigo, tobacco, all have been tried, and tried successfully; but we need hardly add to this enumeration that experiments on a small scale, however fortunate, give no pledge as to the adaptation of the article for the purposes of the merchant.

There is at the Cape, as in all the other colonies, a great outcry for Labour; but government perhaps acts wisely in yielding nothing to enthusiasm. The experiment tried on so liberal a scale in 1820 proves that the progress of this settlement will not be brilliant, but that, if moderately slow, it will be sure. One of the most distinguished of the emigrants, both for talent and virtue, was the late Thomas Pringle,—a name which the author of these pages cannot recall without feelings of admiration and regret,—and his Narrative, to which the beautiful truthfulness of the man gives a Crusoe-like interest, traces the destiny of the colony in that of the small family band of which he was the leader. "Without having any pretensions to wealth," he concludes, "and with very little *money* among them, the Glen Lynden settlers (with some exceptions) may be said to be in a thriving, and, on the whole, in a very enviable condition. They are no longer molested by either predatory Bushmen or Kafirs; they have abundance of all that life requires for competence and for comfort; and they have few causes for anxiety about the future. Some of them who have now acquired considerable flocks of merino sheep have even a fair prospect of attaining to moderate wealth."

CHAPTER III.

ISLANDS OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEAN—RETROSPECT AND CONCLUSION.

In 1502, nineteen years after Diaz doubled the Cape of Storms, another Portuguese navigator when returning from India, discovered a small barren rock in the South Atlantic Ocean, twelve hundred miles from the African shore, and bestowed upon it the name of the divinity to whom the day belonged, Saint Helena. The coast was rugged and bare, rising in almost perpendicular precipices; though at a distance some central eminences appeared to be covered with vegetation, while the peepul tree of Bengal grew everywhere in the glens and interstices, and mantled the cliffs with its perennial verdure. The shores were alive with turtles, seals, and sea-lions; and myriads of wild fowl hovered screaming around the rocks.

In 1513 a vessel was passing this uninviting rock, having on board a Portuguese nobleman who had been mutilated for his crimes, and sent away ignominiously from India, by the great Albuquerque. The prisoner, dreading the idea of returning to his country under such

circumstances, prevailed upon the captain to set him on shore; and supplies of all kinds being sent to him by his friends, he found himself in a year or two more comfortable then he had probably expected. He imported hogs, goats, domestic poultry, fruits, and vegetables, and everything appeared to thrive in quite a remarkable degree. In four years, however, the convict was removed by government; and by-and-by his place was filled by four runaway slaves, two men and two women, who had escaped from a ship. These new inhabitants soon multiplied to the number of twenty; but the vessels which now began to touch at the island to supply themselves with fresh provisions, found their competition disadvantageous; and in order to enjoy the live stock and fruits of the original Solitary without rivals, they hunted out the slave-settlers and their families till they succeeded in destroying them.

Saint Helena, owing to the trade-winds, is difficult to hit upon, at least in the outward voyage; and in an epoch when all commercial advantages that were communicated were supposed to be lost, it is not surprising that the Portuguese should have kept the fact of its existence a secret from other nations, till 1588 when it was discovered by Captain Cavendish on his return from a circumnavigation of the globe. From this date the lonely rock was visited by English, Spanish, Dutch, and Portuguese ships indiscriminately; and when the two last nations were at war, the single anchorage it possesses was occasionally the scene of bloody conflicts. The Portuguese at length became independent of the island—(repeatedly ravaged, and its stock maliciously destroyed by both belligerents)—in consequence of their numerous settlements on the south-eastern coast of the neighbouring continent; and at length they abandoned it altogether. In 1643, however, it was again stocked by some ship-

wrecked mariners of the same nation; and in two years after the Dutch considered it worth their while to capture and colonize it. But when this nation in 1651 planted themselves, as we have related, at the Cape, they withdrew their establishment from the little island rock; and immediately after an English homeward bound East India fleet took possession of it for the Company, who were afterwards confirmed in their occupation by a royal charter of Charles II. In 1672 the Dutch were repulsed in a new attack; but in the night of the same day they landed five hundred men, and the governor and garrison retreated to a ship in the roads. In the following year it was recaptured by Captain Munden; and six Dutch Indiamen immediately after sailing into the bay with a new governor and reinforcements on board, fell likewise into the hands of the English, whose commander had kept the Dutch flag flying for a decoy.

Saint Helena was now used by the East India Company as a maritime station till 1833, when having no longer a mercantile fleet, they gave it up to the crown. The population at present amounts to about five thousand, in a circumference of twenty-eight miles. In 1815, we may add, the island received a prisoner whose name would cause it to be remembered to the last ages of the world, even if the volcanic agency which is supposed to have raised it from the sea were to sink it again to the bottom. Napoleon Buonaparte meditated on that ocean rock for six years, and then, in 1821, gave forth to the Atlantic a spirit as vast and indomitable as itself.

The small island of Ascension is six hundred miles to the north-west of Saint Helena, and consists of little more than barren rocks, on which the sea breaks with great violence. Both islands are at present merely refreshing stations; but they are likewise impregnable fortresses

which, in the event of a war, would become of great importance for the protection of our commerce.

Having now finished our allotted task, we cannot refrain from looking back for a moment before laying down the pen. Awed as we are by the magnitude—haunted and oppressed by the power and greatness—of that Dominion, the eastern and southern portions of which have in these volumes been so inadequately described, the result of our Survey is still a conviction that not only the British Empire but the world itself is in its infancy. The great nations of what men delight to call Antiquity passed along the earth like shadows, leaving hardly a mark upon its surface; and those that still remain in the farther east—gazed upon by the modern world like spectres of the past—are crumbling away before our eyes. All things proclaim that the globe has reached a new epoch in its existence; while its immense expanses of thinly inhabited or entirely desert surface, as well as the lapse of ages and kingdoms without permanent results—without leaving any other memorials for mankind than a few tombs and ruins—prove that epoch to be an early one.

But the new era is more promising than the past. The former world was destroyed by barbarians, who built their huts with the fragments of its palaces. Forests grow where the air once vibrated with the voice of cities, and the heretofore highways of commerce echo to the roar of wild beasts. In many places society has crumbled into its original elements, agriculturists falling back into shepherds, and shepherds into hunters and pensioners on the spontaneous bounties of nature. But the progress of mankind, though interrupted, was not destined to stop. In Europe there occurred, in the full-

ness of time, a collision of races from which a new form of civilization was to spring; and there the most distant tribes of mankind, called unconsciously from the east, the west, the north, and the south, flung themselves with a blind and headlong rage upon each other. The result of this collision is seen in the present age; for now is the great day of the west, in which the prophecy of the old man of the Ark is to be fulfilled,—that Japhet shall dwell in the tents of Shem! Japhet, it is true, carries a sword to slay as well as a torch to enlighten—(another proof that the world is still in its mad youth)—but if we could look back upon his cruelties through the sobering vista of ages, we should find them resemble mercy itself when compared with the gigantic crimes of his Asiatic brother.

At the head of the western nations stands Great Britain, with the proudest sceptre the world ever saw, held more easily in the gentle hands of a woman than Alexander wielded that of the Greeks. The subjects of this Island Queen include one seventh part of mankind, and her territories extend over more than one seventh part of the surface of the globe. Yet the British empire, like the globe itself, is in its infancy. Its expansion has only begun. Its illumination plays only on the outer crust of the Asiatic mind, just as its dominion circles round the coasts of the Australian continent, leaving the untrodden depths of the interior a land of darkness and dreams. But the very juvenility of its power points to a destiny not the less glorious from its vagueness; and the line of new empires of which it will yet be the Mother appears, like that of the spectre-kings of Macbeth, to stretch out to the crack of doom.

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